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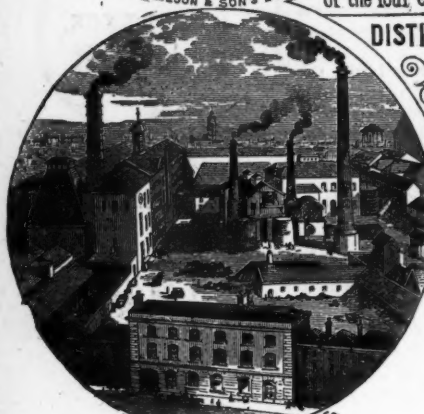


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Great Civil War, the Author has taken advantage of the demand for this new edition, to present to the public the result of his historical researches and labours as a connected whole—as well as to subject his work to a thorough revision, especially in that part which relates to the reign of JAMES the FIRST. New materials have accumulated since the publication of his earlier volumes. Many valuable transcripts from the Roman archives are now in the Public Record Office, and the Author has, by the kind permission of the Marquess of SALISBURY, been able to examine the collection of letters belonging to the first Earl of SALISBURY preserved at Hatfield House. He has also had the advantage of being able to use Mr. SPEDDING'S *Letters and Life of Bacon*, which as far as the reign of JAMES the FIRST is concerned, were not published when his own account of that time was written. To some extent, too, twenty years have brought with them a modification of the views held by the Author, based upon increased knowledge and upon the wider charity which is its invariable accompaniment.

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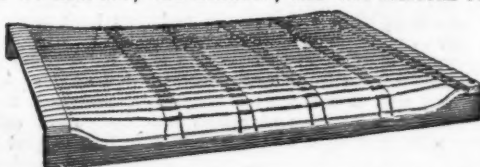
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SEPTEMBER 1883.

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LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE.

SEPTEMBER 1883.

Thicker than Water.

BY JAMES PAYN, AUTHOR OF 'BY PROXY,' 'HIGH SPIRITS,' &C.

CHAPTER XLIV.

PULLING THE TRIGGER.

IT was one of the privileges of those who from time to time Mr. Beryl Peyton placed in the forefront of his favours, to be admitted into his counsels, and to have their advice demanded upon this or that scheme of benevolence: a circumstance which sometimes proved the cause of their undoing.

'First catch your patron,' may be an important proviso, but it is useless unless you possess the art of keeping him: and this is the more difficult the more familiar you are with him, inasmuch as he has thereby opportunities to find out how much he was mistaken in you. And thus it had happened to more than one whom Mr. Beryl Peyton had delighted to honour. They had been created grand viziers, only to be bowstrung, or at all events to be banished from their master's presence, and to have their names obliterated from his will.

Up to this time Edgar Dornay had held his place by the throne without misadventure: partly perhaps because he did not take such pains to keep it as some of his predecessors had done. He was not blind to his own interests, and, as we know, by no means disinclined to the possession of great wealth; but he was not one of those who think that gold can never be bought too dearly, or who have a natural hunger for it. He was neither

grasping nor greedy, and much too fond of his ease to seek wealth at the sacrifice of comfort. His manners were agreeable without sycophancy. To Beryl Peyton, who was accustomed to the fulsome arts of expectation, it appeared that the young man had both independence and self-respect. He had never fallen into the error of making stepping-stones of others into Mr. Peyton's favour, nor fomented his anger against them; and his behaviour as Mary Marvon's rejected suitor had been unexceptionable. He had accepted his *congé* with such good humour that Mr. Peyton, who was of course in ignorance of his previous love passages with Mary, had complimented him upon it.

'Well, sir, of course I am disappointed,' Edgar had said, 'and the more so because I see you are disappointed too. It would have been easy to shrug my shoulders—impertinence is always easy—but there is no reason because Miss Marvon refuses me her love, that I should cease to respect her. For my part, I think it a piece of great arrogance to cut the throat of a young lady (as I read in the newspapers often happens) simply because one has failed to recommend oneself to her. That dog-in-the-manger notion of "If I can't have her nobody else shall" seems to me, to say no worse of it, both egotistic and contemptible.'

These generous sentiments were very agreeable to Mr. Beryl Peyton, but he had discovered expectation in so many garbs, that he was not quite certain of their genuineness. An opportunity now arose to test it.

There came a certain day when to an attentive observer the dinner-party at the Hall seemed to have a cloud upon it.

Mr. Charles Sotheran indeed was not aware of its existence: and if he had been, it would scarcely have attracted his attention. He was as independent of clouds as a man in a waterproof, or rather there was a reflected sunshine about him (emanating from his next neighbour) which destroyed their influence. He had understood from Mr. Rennie (still specially retained on the premises) that when he returned to town to resume his duties at the Probate Office, it was within the bounds of possibility that he should take Mary with him; and this naturally afforded him an agreeable topic of conversation with his proposed fellow-traveller.

Except that Mary looked forward with unfeigned regret to her parting from her hostess, no two young people were ever more thoroughly happy. It must be added to their honour that all the ladies sympathised with them; even Miss Price, who had never been wooed, and Mrs. Welbeck, who had been wooed once too

often. It is the attribute of all women, not naturally bad, or soured by disappointment, to feel a kindly interest in turtle-doves about to mate. Their coo finds a responsive echo in their gentle breasts as surely as does that of a baby. As for Mrs. Peyton, her pleasure in the contemplation of the happiness of her young favourites made her almost oblivious of the vacancy their absence would create in her heart and home. Could she see them married, she could certainly die happy; and as to living, the time for that she was well convinced would be but short. If gloom intruded upon her, it was cast by the dread of delay. As the time drew near for the accomplishment of her hopes, the least incident excited her fears; and it did not escape her notice that certain of her guests were more silent than usual, and seemed to avoid even exchanging glances with one another. Had she watched them more narrowly, she might have observed that Mr. Ralph Dornay's manner was more frank and *débonnaire* than was usual with him since he had come into his wife's property, and that more than once Dr. Bilde condescended to exchange a few words with him in his superior manner upon unimportant subjects. It seemed as though, freed for awhile from their respective responsibilities, these representatives of science and social position had agreed to unbend, and even that they made some point of impressing upon society that for the moment they had nothing of supreme importance upon their minds. Mr. Marks and Mr. Naylor, on the contrary, preserved an unbroken silence, and kept their eyes fixed upon their plates, save that now and then they snatched a furtive glance in the direction of Mr. Beryl Peyton, who was dispensing hospitality in his matter-of-course manner, and conversing with Edgar Dornay about the window-gardens of the poor.

Of the proverbial bad quarter of an hour after dinner, the two philosophers had little experience: they had not settled many dinner bills, but they endured quite enough on the present occasion to restore the average. Over the dessert, when the ladies had withdrawn, they suffered agonies of suspense and apprehension. For though the bill of indictment that had been formed against Charles Sotheran and Mary Marvon had been placed that morning, with their names affixed to it, in Mr. Peyton's hands, he had not even acknowledged its receipt. The pistol which had been so skilfully loaded for them they had let off with their own hands, yet no report had followed. Had it missed fire altogether, or what? In that 'what' lay the most terrible contingencies. Was it Mr. Peyton's intention to treat the matter with silent contempt, or to

visit them with his wrath and indignation? Or was he only making inquiries into the truth of their allegations before proceeding to action? Had he taken that operation of having his eyes opened in the very worst part, he could hardly have hit upon a form of punishment more severe than that which he was at present inflicting.

It by no means mitigated their apprehensions that when they applied to Dr. Bilde in their extremity, he gave them neither encouragement nor comfort; nay, what seemed monstrous in a person of his profession, he had not even advice to offer them. He only remarked, that to a well-regulated mind the approval of one's own conscience, and the conviction that we have done our best to further the cause of moral order, should be a sufficient compensation for whatever happens.

As for Mr. Ralph Dornay, he merely shrugged his shoulders and smiled, as a man with thirty thousand a year can afford to smile at the pecuniary perplexities of his fellow creatures.

'When you go in for a great stake, gentlemen,' he said, with his thumbs in the armholes of his waistcoat, 'it is only reasonable that you should incur some risk.'

To the observation that he had put the thing into their heads, he replied that to reveal what gentlemen said to one another in casual conversation was a breach of confidence, and that to make any use of it to his disadvantage was held on all hands to be so dishonourable that the injured person was justified in giving a distinct denial to anything and everything. This was said with the air of a man who intends to act up to his principles.

Even on a bed of down we are told that conscience is uneasy. But still one is unwilling to exchange it for a wool mattress: and each of the two philosophers passed a wretched night, from the reflection that it might possibly be the very last time that (left to his own resources) he would sleep in a featherbed.

In Mr. Peyton's study after breakfast some 'private theatricals' took place of rather a serious kind. As Edgar and his host were smoking their cigars together as usual, the elder gentleman threw an open letter over to his companion, with a dry 'Read that.' It was a missive of great length, and had not come by the post, but had been placed in Mr. Peyton's hands by his valet, 'With Mr. Naylor's compliments,' on the previous morning. It took some minutes to get through it, and even when it was done Edgar remained speechless, but full of thought. It is possible that he was hesitating between honour and self-interest; if so, it was fortunate

for him that he decided in favour of the former, since if he had taken the course which looked most to his own advantage he would have repented it.

There were several of the Happy Family for trial that morning, and among them (to judge by the way in which Mr. Peyton looked at him from under his large white hand) was Edgar Dornay himself.

'Well, what do you think of it, Dornay?'

'They are lying, sir,' was the quiet reply.

'You mean as regards the girl? You think it impossible——'

'I do not think, because I am quite certain,' put in Edgar vehemently, 'that Miss Marvon has done nothing to be ashamed of.'

'But perhaps—long ago,' suggested the old man tenderly, 'under circumstances at which we cannot guess, harassed by trouble, pinched by poverty, tempted—who can tell?'

'I can tell,' answered Edgar, quietly. 'Never, never.'

Mr. Peyton hid his eyes, for they sparkled with pleasure.

'But the lad,' he went on; 'it looks bad against the lad.'

'They have made it look bad,' said Edgar. His tone had changed; it was still confident, but had lost its fervour. The matter was comparatively indifferent to him. On the other hand, the man was his successful rival, and it therefore behoved him (an idea, which though they were so full of ideas, would never have occurred to Mr. Marks or Mr. Naylor), to say what good he knew of him.

'Still, if he said these things,' said Mr. Peyton, pointing to the letter, 'it was most ungrateful, and I hate ingratitude.'

'Mr. Sotheran's nature is not, in my opinion, an ungrateful one. I will even say'—this with a dead lift, but he did say it—'that it is incapable of ingratitude.'

'They say he called me Tarquinius Superbus,' muttered Mr. Peyton, pulling at his long white beard.

'I did not say that Mr. Sotheran was incapable of an impertinence,' was the quiet reply.

'These gentlemen, to use their own words,' said Mr. Peyton, 'have "courted investigation." I have caused certain inquiries to be made, the result of which will be placed before us. They have asked for justice; they shall have it. Will you oblige me by ringing the bell?'

CHAPTER XLV.

THE INDICTMENT.

EDGAR DORNAY was very far from wishing to be a spectator of what was about to follow. But an heir presumptive has his duties, and it was a part of them in this case to stand on the right hand of the sovereign while administering justice. In the Letcombe Dottrell kingdom there was a still more significant sign of heirship—namely, to be present during Mr. Peyton's confidences with his lawyer; but to that topmost peak of expectation Edgar Dornay had not yet reached. Though on a very high rung of the ladder, he was still on his promotion. Mr. Peyton had never to ring twice except for a reason; when he did so, it produced not the footman but his valet.

'Derwood,' he said, 'ask Mr. Marks and Mr. Naylor to be so good as to favour me with their company.'

Nothing could be more stolidly respectful than Mr. Derwood's face as he left the room to execute his master's orders, but directly the door had closed behind him it became full of expression. Sailors talk in their melodramatic manner of 'the plank between them and eternity,' but a great man's door is also a plank of some importance, on one side of which things take place that never occur upon the other.

'Here's another row,' soliloquised the valet, laying his finger to the side of his nose, as was his habit when reflecting upon the changes and chances of human life, of which, since he had been some years at Letcombe Hall, he had seen something, 'if the goose of them two gents isn't cooked my name isn't Sam Derwood.' Then, as if suddenly affected by a reminiscence (though, in his case, it was the absence of one), he added briskly, 'and a good job too. I don't remember as either of them ever gave me so much as would buy a cigar with.'

If there is a mammon of unrighteousness which it behoves persons who live in expectancy to make friends of, it is their patron's valet; yet Messrs. Marks and Naylor had entirely omitted this precaution. They ought by rights to have been millionaires, so slow they were to part with their money; Mr. Marks, it is true, had feed Scarsdale, because her evidence was important to the present inquiry, and Mr. Naylor (not to waste his means upon a mere presentment) had chucked her under the chin; but the bribe in

neither case would have been sufficient to enlist her aid had she not been disposed to help them for other reasons. Now though years of service had robbed Scarsdale of her youth, they had enabled her (in compensation) to put by a tidy sum of money, whereof Mr. Samuel Derwood being enamoured, he had proposed to her; and, either in order to make a cheap show of virtue, or to stimulate Mr. Derwood himself to similar gallantries, she had confessed in her own way (she had even added 'he kissed me') Mr. Naylor's indiscretion to the valet.

His jealous indignation may be imagined. 'What!' he cried, 'do you mean to say he never gave you nothing to take the taste out of it? Scaly varmint!'

Ignorant of this extraneous enemy, but with sufficient apprehensions of danger from more direct sources, the two philosophers were ushered into the hall of audience. Mr. Peyton, standing with his back to the fireplace, gravely pointed out two chairs immediately opposite that in which his young friend was already seated. Never had involuntary spectator a better view of any performance than the unfortunate Edgar.

'I have requested my friend Mr. Dornay's presence here,' observed Mr. Peyton in explanation, 'because I have confidence in his judgment, and also because he has some knowledge of the previous history of the two persons whom the document you have placed in my hands concerns. He is already acquainted with its contents, so that it will be unnecessary to read it. Have you anything to add, gentlemen, to the information which it purports to afford?'

'Nothing, save that it is all true,' observed Mr. Marks in a solemn tone. It had been agreed between the two accusers that Mr. Marks should be their mouthpiece, and if he had been appointed Speaker to the House of Commons he could not have acquitted himself with greater dignity and sedateness.

'That is a bold thing to say of eight pages of manuscript,' returned Mr. Peyton; 'yet even if it *were* true, I should have thought you might at least have added that it was with sincere regret you found yourself compelled to make such allegations against two young people whose future fortunes it was only too likely to affect for ill. But perhaps,' he added, with unmistakable irony, 'you never thought of the future.'

This was very rough on the philosophers, whose silence (which had provoked this outbreak) was in reality caused by the em-

barrassment of their position. What Mr. Marks had had it on the tip of his tongue to say was that it was with a bleeding heart he had forced himself to make these charges, but that where the interests of so dear and revered a friend as Mr. Beryl Peyton were concerned, all other considerations sank into insignificance. But such sentiments are for a patron's ear alone. With Edgar Dornay sitting within two feet of him it was really impossible to indulge in them. Far from suspecting that that gentleman was almost as uncomfortable as himself, he did him the injustice of supposing him capable of exclaiming 'Rubbish!' at the conclusion of some burst of loyalty.

Mr. Marks did, however, manage to say that he had only performed what was to him a most unpleasant duty. He had noticed that Mr. Peyton had showed considerable favour to Mr. Charles Sotheran, and the gross ingratitude which the young man had evinced when speaking of his benefactor, not to mention the motives of self-interest by which he was evidently actuated——

'Never mind the motives,' interrupted Mr. Peyton, drily. 'We can all supply those for one another. Let us stick to facts. He was disrespectful to me in his conversation, it seems?'

'Very,' observed Mr. Marks.

'And frequently, eh?'

'Always,' struck in Mr. Naylor.

'Then it strikes me you must have encouraged him,' suggested Mr. Peyton.

Nothing, averred both gentlemen, could be more groundless than such an accusation. They had been too appalled to stop him and simply let him run on. What must have been their feelings, for example, Mr. Marks ventured to inquire, with a glance towards the indictment, what must have been their righteous indignation when this young person had the audacity to liken his patron to Tarquinius Superbus?

'Why did he call me that, I wonder?' inquired Mr. Peyton, with a glance at Edgar.

'Though white as Mount Soracte
When winter nights are long,'

suggested the young poet,

'His beard flowed down o'er mail and belt,
His heart and hand were strong.'

'To be sure—a very apt quotation,' observed the old man,

smiling. 'His other remarks, however, it seems, were not so complimentary. Is this allegation literally true, gentlemen, that Mr. Sotheran said "The old fool"' (he here read an extract from the indictment) "'will settle some money on the girl (meaning Miss Marvon), and then I will marry her:" and again, "I wish the old fool was dead."'

'Those were the words Mr. Sotheran used,' said Mr. Marks, with a slight cough, as if something stuck in his throat.

'Is that your impression also, Mr. Naylor?'

'He made use, if not of those actual words, of words of a similar purport, sir.'

'There was a witness once who said "the prisoner cried 'Bill, Bill,' or words to that effect,"' observed Mr. Peyton, drily. 'I trust, Mr. Naylor, you will be found to be equally conscientious. I have made inquiries, however, into this matter, and testimony will be produced which does not quite bear out what you two gentlemen have said. It tends to prove, I am sorry to say, that though Mr. Sotheran may have been indiscreet and disrespectful in his language, a certain colour has been given to it.'

'Not by us, sir,' murmured Mr. Marks. A dreadful suspicion crossed his mind that Ralph Dornay and Dr. Bilde were acting treacherously to them, and for some reason of their own had turned informers. For to what other testimony could their host refer?

Mr. Peyton rang the bell, and by some intermediate agency, for it is certain he could never have heard it, it was answered by Japhet Marcom, the deaf-mute.

Notwithstanding his height and strong build, this man had usually the patient apathetic look which belongs to those who are similarly afflicted—a gentle attentiveness, as if they would fain listen to you if they could. But on this occasion there was a severity in his face that almost approached truculence.

'You have seen these gentlemen walking on the terrace lately now and then, Japhet?' said Mr. Peyton, indicating the two philosophers with his finger.

Japhet's eyes shone 'yes,' as he inclined his head with quiet confidence.

'And from where you were you could hear—in your way—pretty accurately what they said?'

Mr. Marks and Mr. Naylor smiled incredulously, as indeed did Edgar himself. Japhet's services were devoted to his master and not given to the public at large. If the Happy Family ever

bestowed a thought upon him, it was to conclude (as indeed was the fact) that his name was to be found among the lesser blessed in Mr. Peyton's will. They knew that his master and he had some mysterious means of communicating with one another, and that was all.

'You seem to doubt Japhet's powers, gentlemen,' observed Mr. Peyton. 'Be so kind, Mr. Dornay, as to ask him a question for yourself.'

'Is the clock at the church, Japhet,' inquired Edgar, 'faster or slower than the Hall time?'

The mute pointed to the time-piece over the mantelpiece, and moved his hand with great rapidity.

'He says our time is faster,' explained Mr. Peyton. 'If you had made the inquiry fifty feet hence, and in a whisper, he would have heard you equally well. If he is near enough to see the movement of your lips he can tell what they say. If you doubt this, gentlemen, you can make proof of it for yourselves, but for my part I know it to be the case; and whatever Japhet has repeated to me of this matter is, to my mind, I frankly tell you, testimony to be relied on as surely as though he had made a third at your interviews, and every word you said had been addressed to him.'

Mr. Marks' lips moved as if he himself were dumb; Mr. Naylor gibbered like a ghost, or a detected presentment.

'Japhet has, at my suggestion,' continued Mr. Peyton, 'written out a detailed account of what he heard in the walled garden. It is here, open to your inspection, gentlemen, and—if it can be refuted—to your refutation. Japhet alleges that you agreed together that there could be no harm in putting into Mr. Sotheran's mouth the sentiments which you took it for granted he entertained. For example, since you supposed he would like Miss Marvon no less for being well dowered, you thought it a natural thing to make Mr. Sotheran say, "The old fool will settle some money on the girl, and then I will marry her." Do you still maintain, gentlemen, that those were the actual words Mr. Sotheran used? On the other hand, Japhet is confident as to your own employment of this rather singular phrase'—here Mr. Peyton once more referred to the manuscript—"By hook or by crook, we must get both the boy and the wench out of the house."

'It seems to me, Mr. Peyton,' said Mr. Marks, turning very pale and speaking in quavering tones, 'that you have hardly behaved quite fairly to us in discussing in the presence of a third person'

—here he indicated Edgar Dornay—‘a matter which was communicated to you under the seal of confidence. Our communication, if you will be so good as to observe, was marked “private and confidential.”’

‘Good heavens, sir! am I the Lion of Venice,’ exclaimed Mr. Peyton, angrily, ‘that I should take every charge for granted that malice and ill-will may invent against an innocent man? If I hesitate to confront him with his accusers, do you suppose that is for their sakes, and merely because they have expressed a wish—under the circumstances, a very natural wish—to remain anonymous? What right have you to complain because I take this gentleman here into my confidence? What hinders you from defending yourselves because he is present?’

It was rather difficult for poor Mr. Marks to explain his position—the statement that his conversations with Mr. Naylor had been overheard, which he did not in the least doubt, had utterly overwhelmed him. He was conscious of having said so many damaging things. There seemed to him but one way of escape for them out of the hole, just as the fox made use of the goat in the well, namely on the shoulders of Mr. Ralph Dornay. He would have liked to say that the character that gentleman had given them of Mr. Sotheran had so utterly shocked their sense of propriety, that they had taken what might certainly seem somewhat extreme measures to prevent Mr. Peyton’s favour from being abused. They had gone, perhaps, further than they were justified in going, but not of themselves; Mr. Ralph Dornay had given them the momentum. This is what seemed their best and, indeed, their only line of defence; but how could they take it in the presence of Mr. Dornay’s nephew?

‘You must remember, sir,’ said Mr. Marks, wetting his dry lips as the serpent flickers with his forked tongue, ‘that there is another person implicated in this unhappy matter, and that a motive of delicacy, which you will, I am sure, both understand and appreciate, prevents its full discussion—ahem!—under present circumstances.’

‘Pray do not let your consideration for Miss Marvon stand in your way,’ replied Mr. Peyton, coldly. ‘If you have nothing more to say against the young lady than you have had to urge against Mr. Sotheran, it will not distress Mr. Dornay, though he entertains as high a regard for her as anyone must do who has the good fortune to be acquainted with her.’

‘You must please to remember, Mr. Peyton,’ said Mr. Marks,

hurriedly, 'that we have personally made no charge of any kind against Miss Marvon. We have only repeated, from a sense of what was owing to yourself, what we have heard of her from other sources, and which a very little inquiry on your part will corroborate or disprove.'

'You speak of other sources,' said Mr. Peyton, icily; 'be so good as to name one of them.'

'Permit me, sir, to mention Scarsdale, Mrs. Peyton's maid.'

CHAPTER XLVI.

SCARSDALE'S TESTIMONY.

At the name of Mrs. Peyton there flitted across her husband's face an angry flush. Notwithstanding his democratic opinions, and the freedom with which he mingled with his inferiors, Beryl Peyton was intensely proud, though as men of his class often are, only at second-hand. He himself, that is, had no objection to be treated as an equal by any human being; but his belongings were 'taboo;' he resented—and all the more because he himself paid so little deference to her opinions—the least disrespect shown to his wife. Even the introduction of her maid's name into the matter on hand annoyed him, because it might be the prelude to the citation of Mrs. Peyton herself. Nevertheless, he was not the man to suffer his private feelings to interfere with the course of justice.

'If Mrs. Peyton's maid has anything to say to this matter, let her say it,' he said, and that lady was summoned accordingly.

To Messrs. Marks and Naylor her appearance gave a great relief, for they felt that in her hands their cause was far safer than in their own. As a junior with the conduct of a great case unexpectedly thrust upon his inadequate shoulders, joys to see his leader suddenly appear in court, and trusts that his mistakes will be repaired and his lost ground recovered, so did they hail the appearance of their female ally. Though very far from being innocents, they were ill adapted by nature for plots and stratagems; and if they had not known as much half an hour ago, they knew it now. They were conscious of having, so far, made a complete and deplorable failure of the little matter they had taken in hand. On paper, that is to say while they were talking

the affair over between themselves, their plan of the campaign had seemed to be perfect. Each had only to corroborate the other's story, and the thing was done. That the cause should ever come to be tried in open court had never entered into their calculations. It was shameful that such doubts should have been thrown upon two gentlemen's words, while as for the unlooked-for intervention of Japhet Marcom, it was a circumstance little short of diabolic. But what in reality more alarmed them and put them off their balance than all the rest, was the tone and manner of Mr. Peyton himself. What they had looked for was not indeed an upright judge; they had imagined that, weighed down by the sense of obligation arising from their disinterested action, he would have leant very considerably in their direction; whereas it was now evident that he was inclining to the other side.

Hitherto, however, testimony had been hostile to them: in the excellent Scarsdale they felt sure of a partisan. She had spoken to them of Miss Marvon with such bitterness upon her own account, that they were confident nothing would be wanting to her accuracy in the way of zeal. She was not beautiful, but they did not require a Phryne to plead their cause. Her high colour suggested animus—the right animus; her set lips resolution, nor did her large black eyes abate their keenness one whit, though she stood in the presence of her master.

'You have something to say, it seems, concerning Miss Marvon?' observed Mr. Peyton quietly. 'What is it?'

'About Miss Marvon? Me, sir? No, sir!'

Her look was innocence itself, mingled with amazed surprise.

'Well, you *have* said something about her, at all events,' said Mr. Peyton coldly. 'Is it not so, gentlemen?' he addressed his remark to the two philosophers, but Scarsdale answered it.

'Not as I am aware on, sir; I have never spoken of the young lady except in answer to questions.'

If this reply was accidental it was a most unfortunate one for the prosecutors, since it suggested the process called pumping; but if it was intentional—designed that is to isolate them and place the speaker herself in a position of neutrality—their case was pitiable indeed. Mr. Marks felt like an indifferent swimmer, who having just seized hold of some sapling on the bank which promised safety, finds it gradually coming up by the roots.

'Mr. Naylor and I put certain inquiries to this young person,' he explained, 'which were necessitated by the circumstances of the case. We knew that there was a secret—I regret to say a

shameful secret—connected with Miss Marvon's past, and we thought, acting as we were in your interests, that the most likely person to enlighten us upon the subject was her waiting maid.'

'I am not Miss Marvon's maid,' exclaimed Scarsdale, vehemently.

To a close observer this was the first sign of naturalness which this lady had evinced; hitherto she had been under the influence of a severe self-restraint, but in these words she broke away from it.

'Of course not, Scarsdale,' put in Mr. Marks, soothingly; 'you are Mrs. Peyton's own maid; still, you have necessarily seen much of her companion. Now, what did you tell me and Mr. Naylor here, on Wednesday last, respecting her?'

'Nothing; nothing, that is, as I particularly remember.'

'Oh dear, oh dear! but you surely must,' insisted Mr. Marks; the fact of his having given her half a sovereign on the occasion in question had impressed all the surrounding circumstances so vividly upon his own mind, that he could not understand this plea of forgetfulness in another. 'You told us, you know, how very intimate your mistress was with Miss Marvon, so much so that it made the young lady "forget her place," as you expressed it.'

'I don't remember,' reiterated Scarsdale, stolidly. This second disclaimer was a mistake; it is possible to make a false step in refusing to take any step at all. It was clear to both Mr. Peyton and to Edgar that the phrase in question had been Scarsdale's own. This seemed even to strike herself—or perhaps the glances they exchanged with each other did not escape her—for she presently added, 'I don't say as Missis and Miss Marvon were not intimate.'

'Just so, and very confidential,' put in Mr. Marks. 'They talked together pretty often of Miss Marvon's proposed marriage, did they not?'

'Sometimes.'

'And your mistress seemed to be in a hurry about it, did she not? Now, why was that?'

'Because,' said Scarsdale slowly, and with her eyes on the carpet, 'Missis felt far from well, and seemed afraid she should never live to see the marriage in which she took such an interest take place.'

'Will you swear,' inquired Mr. Marks with indignation, 'that the reason you gave to me wasn't that there was something discreditable about Miss Marvon which time might bring to light,

and that therefore she was in a hurry to get the matter concluded, with Mr. Peyton's sanction?'

Scarsdale looked up to the ceiling, and half opened her mouth (as though to depict or allegorise an effort of memory), then shook her head and answered rapidly, like a gentleman used to taking official affidavits, 'No, I never did!'

'Then perhaps you will also venture to affirm,' said Mr. Marks, with the calmness of despair, 'that you did not quote to me the other day, "This house for you is full of pitfalls," as an expression used by Mrs. Peyton to Miss Marvon to denote the imminent danger of her secret being discovered so long as she remained at Letcombe Hall?'

Miss Scarsdale's colour heightened, she cast at her master a furtive inquiring glance, as though she would have asked 'Now, what do *you* think? If I said "I didn't," should I pass the extreme limit of that credulity a gentleman owes to a lady's word or not?' Then boldly answered, 'No; I don't remember nothing about pitfalls.'

It was an audacious stroke, but it failed. I sympathise with her, because when I myself have a story suggested to me I never can tell it like one for which I am indebted to my own fancy; and Miss Scarsdale was acting under instructions. Her instinct was to tell the truth and more. She would have liked to say all she knew of Miss Marvon, and to add to it what she thought of her. But Mr. Derwood had forbidden it. It might be thought, since she was ten years his senior, that she ought to have known best how to act, but his youth—or comparative youth—was the very thing that gave him so much influence with her. It was probably her last chance of a husband. 'The game is up, Maria,' he had said. 'I can see by the governor's look that them two gents are in Queer Street: so whatever you do, say nothing to back 'em.' And this had been the secret of Scarsdale's tergiversation, as simple as Columbus's egg trick, when you came to know it, but to Mr. Marks and Mr. Naylor, who didn't know it, utterly inexplicable. It is no wonder that she had not acted naturally the rôle thus imposed on her. Who could expect the villain of a piece to take a virtuous part at a moment's notice, and play it with any gusto? At those words, 'I don't remember nothing about pitfalls,' Mr. Peyton leant across to Edgar, and, without taking much pains to drop his voice, observed, 'This woman is lying.'

Poor Scarsdale! Left to herself she might have scrambled on

along the way of villainy for life with considerable success, till she came to the precipice whither we must all come, but this solitary attempt to tread the path of virtue (though it was altogether involuntary) was her ruin. She had the misfortune to be afflicted with the malady (not solely confined to females) called a 'temper.' Blind with wrath, oblivious of her betrothed and his injunctions, and utterly careless of consistency, she hastened to retrace her steps.

'If you don't believe me, and want to hear something as'll make your hair stand on end, you had better ask Miss Marvon herself.'

'A very good plan,' observed Mr. Peyton in cold and measured tones. He might have been a statue carved in granite, but that at the same moment he nodded significantly at Japhet Marcom. It was not a moment too soon. As the deaf-mute stepped forward to put the furious woman out of the room, she broke out—

'Miss Marvon, indeed; you want to know about her, do you? Ask Mr. Ralph Dornay, ask Dr. Bilde; ask Miss Innocence herself. Hoity toity! here's a fuss about a pretty face. There's no fool like an——'

The rest of the proverb was lost in the passage, but the application of it was preserved by the contemptuous glance she cast, before the door closed on her ejected form, at Mr. Beryl Peyton.

CHAPTER XLVII.

SUSPICION.

EARNESTNESS has become so common a trade, and also so mechanical a one, that the expression of it has little effect on anybody; a touch of nature, on the other hand (which nowadays one meets with but seldom) goes home to every heart. Miss Scarsdale might not have been right in the opinion she had expressed, or hinted, with respect to Miss Mary Marvon, but it had been obviously a genuine one, and so far had its merits. It may seem strange that the wild words of an angry waiting woman should so move a man like Beryl Peyton, but the truth was, that parting shot of hers, 'Ask Mr. Ralph Dornay, ask Dr. Bilde, ask Miss Innocence herself,' had pierced his very heart. It had suggested—what is feared almost as much by the patron as by the tyrant—a

conspiracy. To a benevolent man who has any knowledge of the world, ingratitude in the individual is nothing surprising. It is one of the drawbacks to which the profession of philanthropy is naturally exposed, as that of the farmer is to a bad harvest or that of the merchant to a bad debt; but when the objects of one's benevolence band together, and conspire to hoodwink us, the matter becomes serious, because it implies something amiss in our private compensation balance for setting the world to rights, something rotten at the root of our own system. If Mr. Ralph Dornay and Dr. Bilde knew something discreditable about Mary Marvon, and had suffered him to waste his favours, and what was worse, his affection, upon an unworthy object, why might not others know it? It was true they had shown no liking for her, but even that might have been a part of their duplicity: they might have been in league together none the less that they showed no sign of alliance. On the other hand, Mr. Beryl Peyton was very unwilling to believe anything to Mary's discredit. Her sweetness of disposition had won upon him further than he cared to acknowledge, and also in spite of himself. Once before he had been moved very strongly in favour of a young girl, in a somewhat similar position in that very house, and she had disappointed him cruelly. She had listened to the unworthy solicitations of his own son, which had proved the beginning of unutterable troubles. Was it possible that he was about to be disappointed and deceived a second time? While these bitter thoughts were falling through his mind like sleet, Mr. Naylor spoke. Up to this time, and while matters had been going so dead against him, that gentleman had been well content to use Mr. Marks for a mouthpiece, but now that things had taken a decided turn in his favour he was moved to speak, as a bird tunes his note in the sunshine after showers.

'You were saying it would be a good plan, Mr. Peyton, to question Miss Marvon herself. That strikes me as an excellent suggestion.'

Whether excellent or not, it was certainly not an original one, for it had been proposed by Miss Scarsdale. And this consideration, among others, may have made it unwelcome to Mr. Peyton.

'Do you suppose I am going to send for the young lady *here*,' he exclaimed with indignation, 'to be examined and cross-examined by you and Mr. Marks? Or even that I should expose her to the indignity of answering questions of a private nature in your presence?'

'Certainly not, sir,' said Mr. Naylor hurriedly. To do him

justice, he would have shrunk from any such proceeding; what he would have preferred was to have been an unseen spectator of the investigation—like Lady Teazle in the screen scene, only more virtuous—and to have disclosed himself at the *dénouement*, just as Mary was being turned out of the house.

‘Then, I think, gentlemen,’ said Mr. Peyton, ‘you had better withdraw; you may be assured of justice being done in this affair in your absence, just as though you were witnesses to its administration.’

‘We leave the matter in your hands, sir,’ said Mr. Marks, rising, ‘with the utmost confidence in your sense of right; and whatever may come of this investigation—the necessity of which we deeply deplore—we feel assured that you will give us credit at least for having had no other end in view than the exposure of unworthiness.’

‘I do not pretend to be a judge of motives, Mr. Marks,’ was the dry reply; ‘but the facts of the case, you may rely upon it, shall be thoroughly investigated.’ Mr. Naylor drew out his handkerchief—Mr. Marks had a dreadful misgiving that he was about to burst into tears and confess all—and wiped the perspiration from his forehead; if it was a device to gain time, in order to say a word or two on his own account after the other had left the room, it failed of its intent. Mr. Marks slipped his arm within his own, and led him out like a lady, but with a certain amount of vigour that forbad delay.

Thus left alone with his young friend, Mr. Peyton turned towards him with a grave, pained face.

‘What do you think of it all, Mr. Dornay?’ he inquired.

‘As respects Miss Marvon, sir, my opinion is quite unaltered.’

‘I am glad to hear you say so. Still there is some scandal afoot regarding her, which it is necessary for her own sake to get to the bottom of. That woman we have just seen believed it; those gentlemen believed it.’

‘Let us say they wished to believe it, sir.’

‘Perhaps; I am not sure,’ returned the other gravely. ‘We must give no verdict till we have heard all the evidence.’

‘It is quite impossible, however,’ said Edgar apprehensively, ‘as you were saying, to interrogate Miss Marvon herself;’ and indeed it is but fair to say that Edgar Dornay would have given up all his hopes of inheritance to Beryl Peyton’s wealth (though he knew them by this time to be well founded) rather than have been a party to any such thing.

'Quite true; but I must learn the truth, and the whole truth,' said the old man. 'There is something wrong. "Pitfalls," he murmured; "this place," she said, "is full of pitfalls." Rennie knows her; I will ask Rennie to speak with her. I wish I had spoken to Rennie at first.'

To one who knew Beryl Peyton this admission of a mistake in the presence of another person was full of significance, and augured well indeed for the fortunes of his confidante. The Catholic religion was one that would never have attracted him to its fold, since it enjoins the confession of errors; not even to himself, when anything went wrong, was Mr. Peyton accustomed to own that it had done so through his own fault.

'At all events there has been no harm done,' said Edgar soothingly. This was taking a sanguine view of affairs; for two philosophers, a serving man that is neither deaf nor dumb, and an angry waiting maid, with a suspected but undiscovered secret amongst them, are surely elements of disturbance in any household. Reading something of this in Mr. Peyton's face as he laid his hand upon the bellrope, 'Don't you think,' continued Edgar, 'that instead of sending for Mr. Rennie, it will be well for me to go and fetch him; you could then consult together on what would be advisable, without attracting public attention.'

'Right, my lad, as you usually are,' said Mr. Peyton approvingly. 'You will find him in his room, no doubt. Just ask him to step round.'

Mr. Edgar Dornay's advice had been even more discreet than his host had imagined it to be. In offering it he had had his own enfranchisement in view at least as much as anything else, and when Mr. Rennie, after some interval, made his appearance, he was alone.

'Where is Edgar?' were Mr. Peyton's first words.

'Gone for a constitutional—at least, so he said.'

'Ah, that was his excuse; he did not wish to intrude his presence without an express invitation. What I like him for is his delicacy.'

'Perhaps it was that which made him feel the atmosphere of the court a little oppressive,' said the lawyer drily. 'He seemed uncommonly glad to get away.'

'The whole proceedings were very painful to him, no doubt,' assented Mr. Peyton. 'I take it for granted he has told you what has passed.'

The lawyer nodded gravely.

'His own behaviour throughout has been most admirable,' continued Mr. Peyton earnestly.

'He told me that, too,' said the lawyer; 'or at least led me to conclude as much.'

'You are very hard and very unjust, as you always are, in the case of everyone in whom I take an interest,' said Mr. Peyton, walking to and fro and speaking with great irritation.

'It's such a waste of sympathy to take your first view of them,' said Mr. Rennie, 'since in the end you always find them out.'

'In Edgar Dornay there is nothing to find out,' observed the other confidently.

'At all events he isn't the subject of our present discussion,' answered the lawyer drily. 'You wish to speak to me, as I understand, about Miss Marvon.'

'Yes; Marks and Naylor have put this into my hands—a sort of bill of indictment; and here's Japhet's account of the matter, which puts a part of it—that which relates to Sotheran—in a very different point of view. Just run your eye over them.'

When the lawyer had finished his examination he looked up and observed quietly, 'The thing's plain enough in my judgment. It's not the first time, my dear Peyton, nor the second, that you have asked my opinion upon a similar set of circumstances.'

'You think it's mere jealousy—the wish to supplant?'

'How can you doubt it? "By hook or by crook we must get the boy and wench out of the house," is the key of the whole position. Japhet is sure about the words, I conclude.'

'Quite certain. But both Marks and Naylor assert most positively that there is something in the girl's past of which she has reason to be ashamed.'

'Who told them that?' inquired Mr. Rennie quickly.

'I don't know. Marks said "other sources," but declined to give his authority.'

'Did he? I should like to have him in a witness box for five minutes. However, I can do without him. It was Dr. Bilde.'

'Then it's true,' exclaimed Beryl Peyton sadly; he was thinking of Scarsdale's testimony, 'ask Mr. Ralph Dornay; ask Dr. Bilde.' But to Mr. Rennie, who was unaware of this, the remark seemed singularly inconsequent.

'I don't agree with your premisses, my dear Peyton,' he answered bluntly; 'but, as it happens, I do with your conclusions, Miss Marvon has a past of which she is ashamed.'

'Then there is no such thing as simplicity in women,' exclaimed the old man sadly. 'And you, too, knew it and never told me.' He uttered a deep sigh and fell into his chair. 'It is my fate to be fooled by everyone in whom I put trust.'

'It is the fate of most people, my dear Peyton,' answered the lawyer quietly; 'but as regards Miss Marvon, there is no cause, as far as I know, for disappointment. I said she was ashamed of her past, but not that she had reason for being ashamed of it. She has been weak, she *is* weak, but she is not guilty.'

'You would not say that if she was ten years older,' said the old man gloomily. 'It is wonderful what extenuating circumstances even a lawyer will find in youth, if the culprit is a woman!'

Mr. Rennie opened his eyes to an extent that, upon his own account, they had rarely reached before.

'To make you cynic,' he murmured, 'there is certainly nothing like your thoroughgoing philanthropist soured. 'What I meant, Mr. Peyton,' he added aloud, 'was that Miss Marvon took a morbid view of her own position, which is simply that she has the misfortune to be of illegitimate birth.'

'Do you mean to say that's all!' exclaimed the old man.

'I will lay my life on it,' said the lawyer. 'Dr. Bilde and the rest discovered something wrong and hoped for the worst, whereas they've only found a mare's nest.'

'But it's a positive advantage,' argued Beryl Peyton. 'No family ties—no leeches. Why, the girl is to be congratulated.'

'Well, I didn't do *that*,' said the lawyer comically; 'but upon the circumstances coming to my knowledge, I did my best to combat her own morbid views upon the subject.'

'Poor thing, poor thing! And who were her parents?'

The lawyer played with his watchchain, and answered with an indifferent air, 'Well, the fact is, she doesn't know.'

'Good heavens! then they may be alive now, and when she has got a little money will be sure to turn up again. A woman who is well off is never in want of relatives.'

'They're dead, both dead,' said Mr. Rennie curtly.

'How can she know they're dead if she doesn't know who they were?' was the quick reply.

'Somebody else knows—at least I suspect so. The matter is kept secret from her, probably for some good reason.'

'I must know,' ejaculated Mr. Peyton. His face had suddenly grown dark and frowning, and his lips trembled uneasily; they

were saying to his inward ear, 'What did that woman mean by pitfalls?'

'It is a secret that, in my opinion, ought to be respected,' argued Mr. Rennie.

'You know it then,' put in the old man with a glance of keen suspicion.

'I do not know it, Mr. Peyton; nor, since any allusion to it obviously gives the poor girl pain, have I sought to discover it. Why should you, of all men, who hold the ties of consanguinity so cheap, be solicitous to do so? Why should it not be sufficient for you to be assured—as I do now assure you—that Miss Marvon herself is without the shadow of reproach?'

'No matter why; it is not sufficient. You have said that somebody else knows. You will be so good as to furnish me at once with that person's name.'

A flush came into the lawyer's face at the other's suspicious manner, but he answered drily enough, 'I thought I had already told you I only suspected who it was. I will go to that person, however, and if I have guessed right will endeavour to obtain the information you desire.'

'It is someone in this house then?' exclaimed the other vehemently, as the lawyer rose to leave the room.

'No, sir, it is not; it is someone out of the house.'

As the door closed upon his companion, Beryl Peyton drew a long breath of relief, and as he passed his hand across his forehead, the furrows which angry suspicion had raised there slowly smoothed themselves away. If the someone who alone could solve this mystery was 'out of the house,' that person could not be his wife.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

'IT CAN BUT COST ME A CLIENT.'

THOUGH the lawyer had quitted Mr. Peyton's presence with an air of indifference, and as if bound on an errand of small importance, this was no indication of his real feelings; he had left his client indeed far more at ease than he was himself.

Though a man of few words, he gave attention to the words of others, and with his half-shut eyes saw more than anyone suspected. During his stay at Letcombe Hall he had acquired, without

eavesdropping, or chucking a lady's-maid under the chin, more information than Dr. Bilde and the two philosophers together. Unlike these gentlemen, however, he had learnt quite enough, and was very unwilling to push his investigations further. But now it behoved him to push them. If Mr. Peyton had been content to take things as he found them, it would have been no part of Mr. Rennie's duty to stimulate his curiosity, but once his client had expressed a wish to know the truth, he had no alternative but, having found it, to communicate it to him. And he felt only too sure that whither his steps were now leading him, namely to Bank Cottage, he was about to find it.

Mrs. Sotheran, as usual, was within doors; like most women of her nervous and apprehensive nature, she was a stay-at-home, content to let unfriendly Fate come to her own door rather than go forth to meet it. Even in her youth, when her step was elastic, and she drew her breath without being conscious of the process, exercise had had no charms for her. The fresh air is not for the feeble; the winds of heaven visit them too roughly and only serve to remind them of their weakness. And of late she had other reasons for remaining under her own roof. As the time drew near for her son's marriage with the girl whom she had learnt to love next to her son, a certain picture of a mediæval type was always presenting itself to her morbid imagination; the figure of Beryl Peyton coming up the hill towards her cottage door with this inquiry coming scrollwise out of his mouth, 'Be so good as to tell me who is the young person calling herself Mary Marvon?'

That her son should be happily married and no questions asked, seemed too much bliss to one who made such modest demands on fortune as the poor widow.

When she saw from her window Mr. Rennie leave the high road and turn into the bridle path that led to her dwelling, she knew what he was come about as well as though he had already told her. She might almost have addressed him in the terms used by a lady of a similar temperament, who at last found a burglar under her bed, 'You are the very individual I have been looking for for these twenty years.' It is often the misfortune of this too-providential class to be miserable all their lives about a catastrophe that may never happen; on the other hand, they have certainly the advantage of being prepared for it.

It was with hands that did not tremble, though with a sinking heart, that she opened the door for her visitor, before he knocked at it, and ushered him into her neat little parlour; she was

prepared for the worst and had strung her frail nature up to meet it.

'Why, one would really think you had expected my visit,' said the lawyer cheerfully.

'I saw you coming up the hill,' she murmured evasively, and her head, which was still a pretty one, nodded spasmodically from side to side.

'What a pleasant house and a charming situation you have here,' said Mr. Rennie, who knew very well what that movement meant; 'for my part I like this even better than the view from the Hall,' and he regarded the landscape through the window for a few moments as though he would like to hug it. 'I just looked in for a word or two with you on a matter of business. Can you give me five minutes of your time, my dear Mrs. Sotheran, and alone?'

'Susan is gone down the village, and Jane is in the kitchen,' answered the widow; and with either of those young women she would very gladly have changed places for the remainder of her existence, if only the lawyer would not have said another word.

'Very good, then, since we are liable to no interruption, I may say at once that the subject of our conversation will be Mary Marvon—you know all about her, of course.'

'I know something, but what I know, Mr. Rennie, I am not at liberty to tell,' said the widow. The words came glibly enough, for many a time she had rehearsed them in anticipation of some such an inquiry, but all her preparation could not keep her head from that nervous shaking, nor her frame from trembling in every limb.

'You are quite right to be reticent, Mrs. Sotheran; nothing is more natural than that you should say to yourself, "This is no business of Mr. Rennie's," nor, indeed, is it. I am here as the representative of Mr. Beryl Peyton, and at his express request. It is not unreasonable that he should wish to know something about the antecedents of this young lady, whom he is about to dower handsomely, and concerning whom I may confide to you he has also ulterior intentions. He wishes to be quite certain that these benefits will be conferred upon a person who is worthy of them.'

'I have known Mary Marvon from her birth,' said the widow, confidently, 'and have never seen aught but good in her. She is one in a thousand.'

'So far the court is with you, Mrs. Sotheran,' said the lawyer, smiling; 'if you had said one in ten thousand—so far as I have any experience of young women—you might still plead justifica-

tion You say, however, you have known her from her birth : it is of her birth that I am here to make inquiry.'

'She is a supposititious child,' murmured the poor widow.

'A *what*, ma'am ?'

'A supposititious—dear, dear, what am I saying ! I mean a posthumous child.'

'Just so ; her father died before she was born. Still she must have had a father.'

There was a long pause ; the widow stared at her companion as a bird awaiting deglutition stares at a snake, but uttered not a syllable.

'I suppose I should not be far wrong,' continued the lawyer blandly, 'if I called him Henry Peyton ?'

'Gracious heavens, how did you know that ?' exclaimed Mrs. Sotheran in a terrified whisper.

'I didn't know it till this minute, ma'am. I only guessed as much. She is illegitimate, of course ?'

The widow nodded sideways, but she meant assent. She was speechless with amazement at the other's sagacity.

'I am distressed to give you pain,' said the lawyer kindly ; 'but, as I am sure you will understand, I have no choice. There is nothing to be alarmed at—that is, necessarily. It is a delicate case, but all will depend upon the treatment, and it will be in my hands. Only I must know the truth. Now, who was the mother ?'

Mrs. Sotheran's tongue seemed to cleave to her jaws ; she opened her mouth twice as if for air, and then replied in the same hushed tones, 'Jane Lockwood.'

'That's bad,' said the lawyer, mechanically ; the words escaped him before he knew it, or he would have been careful not to add to his companion's apprehension by any dismal forecast of the future. 'That was the village organist, was it not, the girl he ran off with ?'

'Yes ; from Letcombe Hall.'

This local touch was full of significance ; it was evident that in the widow's eyes it added to the crime of abduction, sacrilege.

'Mr. Peyton took it very much to heart, as I have heard.'

'He did, indeed ; it separated him from his son altogether. It was a terrible time for all of us, and nearly broke Mrs. Peyton's heart. She never set eyes upon her Harry again.'

'Was Mr. Peyton as angry with the girl as with the young man, do you think ?' inquired Mr. Rennie, thoughtfully.

'Not at first ; at first he pitied her. But when his son

refused to marry Miss Campbell of the Towers, which was the only condition upon which he would forgive him—you know the story, of course—he became furious against poor Jane, whose influence, he imagined, was still strong enough to prevent the match.’

‘And was it so?’

‘Heaven knows; the report goes that he soon tired of her, and only refused to obey his father out of obstinacy.’

‘But what do *you* think?’

‘I only saw the poor girl once, when Harry was in America. He may have deserted her (for she had not heard of him for many months), but she did not say so. Indeed she could scarcely have thought so, since she was so solicitous to obey his injunctions.’

‘Now tell me, does Mrs. Peyton know of all this?’

‘She does.’

Mr. Rennie’s countenance fell.

‘How could I help it?’ pleaded the widow, pitifully. ‘Would you have had me keep such a secret to myself? I am not made of stone or steel: and when she was pining away for her dead son, how could I forbear to tell her he had left a child behind him, her own flesh and blood?’

Mr. Rennie shook his head. What he meant to imply was that it was but a natural child, of which the law (which has but a bowing acquaintance with nature) could take no cognizance.

‘Heaven knows,’ continued Mrs. Sotheran, ‘that I would have brought up the child as my own had that been possible; but how could I account for its possession, how bring it here, with a daily, nay hourly, lie on my lips? Instinct would have told the secret.’

‘Then on learning the child’s parentage,’ pursued Mr. Rennie, ‘Mrs. Peyton of course found the means for her support?’

‘She did. How could Mr. Peyton himself blame her for that? But she never saw the child, though she yearned to see her. She was content, rather than incur her husband’s wrath, to ignore her; content that Mary should grow up an orphan waif, having no other friend than myself. Oh, sir, you are a man and do not know a mother’s heart, or you would pity her.’

‘I do pity her,’ returned the lawyer gravely; ‘if nothing had happened more than this I could not blame her. But the girl is here, under her grandfather’s roof, and without his knowledge.’

‘I know. I know. Yes, that is terrible. But Mrs. Becket—there was a quarrel between her and Mary—and the girl was suddenly cast adrift in London, nameless and friendless: no, not friendless, Mr. Rennie, for she has told me how good a friend you

yourself have been to her. You will not desert her now: oh, promise me you will not desert her now.'

'I am not thinking of *her*,' said the lawyer gravely. 'She has friends enough: means enough: and an honest man to love her. I am thinking of Mrs. Peyton.'

'And I too, Mr. Rennie. Do not think I have forgotten her even for a moment. Her husband will never forgive her—never, never. It will kill her.'

'Let us hope it will not be as bad as that. But how could she have done anything so rash, knowing what he is, as to bring the girl here—under his very roof?'

'I have thought of that: nay I have thought of nothing else from the first hour she came. But having seen her—that was the fatal step—having once seen her, she could not resist it.'

The lawyer stroked his chin. He knew that Mrs. Peyton had made up her mind to receive Mary as her companion before her interview with her at Mr. Tidman's establishment: but being a man, he felt it was not worth while to hark back on that. It is only women who cry over spilt milk.

'It is certain that Mr. Peyton is very fond of the girl,' he observed meaningly.

'How could he help it?' observed the widow naïvely.

'And you are sure Mary knows nothing of her parentage—guesses nothing, and is therefore absolutely ignorant of the deception—for such he will consider it—that has been practised upon him?'

'Nothing, nothing.'

'Then I will bring them together,' exclaimed the lawyer vehemently, 'and tell the whole story before them both.'

'Oh, indeed you must not do that. You do not know Mary Marvon, or how she holds her mother's memory: *that* is sacred to her, but for her father's unknown relatives she feels only loathing and contempt. Directly she found out in what relation they stood to her, she refused to take another farthing from them. That was another reason why Mrs. Peyton was compelled to give her a home at Letcombe Dottrell. She was bent on earning her own living rather than receive their alms.'

'I remember,' said Mr. Rennie, thinking of the type-writer and his copyist: 'Mary is a very resolute young woman.'

'Resolute! You don't know Mary Marvon. She will tell Mr. Peyton to his face that his son was a scoundrel.'

‘Quite right,’ said Mr. Rennie, rubbing his hands. ‘I think I see my way. She couldn’t do better. It will only be a corroboration of his own view.’

‘But she will spare nobody, not even Mr. Peyton himself. She will tell him, “Your wife has done all she could—because all she dared—to repair the sin of her son; but *you*—you have done nothing.”’

‘But how could he, when he *knew* nothing?’ said Mr. Rennie smiling. ‘A young lady may be resolute surely, without being unreasonable. At all events I’ll try it.’ ‘At the worst,’ muttered the lawyer to himself, ‘it can but cost me a client.’

(*To be concluded.*)

Titles.

I.

IN one of those articles on American subjects which have since, with some other matter, grown into a little book, I ventured the saying that the love of titles was most strongly shown in our way of speaking of those who are often called the untitled classes. A man who has hitherto been called simply 'Mr.' obtains the right to be called 'Sir' or 'Lord'; and it is said that he has received a 'title' or succeeded to a 'title.' As long as he was plain 'Mr.' he was held not to have a 'title.' It might be truer to say that he has exchanged a title which is not distinctive and which means nothing for a title which is distinctive and which means something. The title of 'Sir' or 'Lord' tells you something about a man; it tells you that he belongs to a class which possesses something special to itself, in any case formal precedence, in some cases substantial privilege. And it marks him further as possessing such privilege or precedence by an undoubted claim, a claim grounded on actual law or on usage so firmly established as to be much the same as law. More definite titles again, as Duke, Bishop, General, tell you still more about a man. They tell you the exact rank or office that he holds; all of them are in their origin, many of them still are in practice, strictly official descriptions. So with adjective titles, 'Honourable,' 'Right Honourable,' and the like, they too tell us some fact about the man who bears them, that he is a peer's son or a privy councillor. That is to say, none of these titles are merely empty titles; they tell you something or another about the man to whom they are applied. It is the plain 'Mr.' which is the simple empty title that tells nothing. It tells you nothing of the real position of the man, nothing of his calling, history, or descent. It at most marks him as not belonging to the very lowest class in the community. Yet, even so far as it does this, it is fluctuating and uncertain. There can be no question as to who is to be called 'Sir,' 'Lord,' or 'Honourable'; it is not a matter of taste or opinion, but of rigidly-enforced and unmistakeable usage. But whether a man is to be called 'Mr.,' or whether he is so very low down that the 'Mr.' may be safely dropped, may well be a matter

of taste or opinion. There is no such inflexible rule about it as there is in the other cases. In short, the higher titles in every case tell you something about the man; the 'Mr.' tells you nothing at all.

Now this is in other words the same thing as to say that 'Mr.,' which is so often spoken of as if it were no title at all, is more distinctly a title, at any rate that it is more distinctly a mere empty title, than those forms of speech which are commonly looked on as if they exclusively were titles. A man is called 'Mr.'; a woman by the same rule is called 'Mrs.' or 'Miss,' for no reason whatever except to avoid the supposed impropriety of calling them by their simple Christian and surnames. 'Mrs.' and 'Miss' do indeed tell us, what 'Lady,' in some of its uses, does not tell us, whether the bearer of the title is married or unmarried; but that is all. And this distinction is the most modern of all. 'Mrs.' and 'Miss' are really the same title, two different corruptions of 'Mistress.' That in one shape the title should imply and in the other should exclude marriage is mere accident. The masculine form 'Master'—whose special sound of 'Mister' must come from the same source as the invariable sound of 'Mistress'—tells us nothing on this point, doubtless because marriage or its absence is less distinctive and important in one sex than in the other. In all cases alike the form is used simply because it is thought disrespectful for any but the most familiar friends to speak of a man as plain 'John' or plain 'Smith' or of a woman as plain 'Mary.' The 'Mr.,' 'Mrs.,' or 'Miss,' tells us nothing about those who bear those titles, except the negative fact that they do not hold any rank or office which would give them a right to any higher title.

This feeling, as far as I know, is now universal in Western Europe, save only in Iceland. I cannot speak from experience; but I am told that in that island nobody but the Governor and the Bishop has any distinctive title. A man is plain 'Magnus,' a woman is plain 'Gunhild.' Yet even there it is said that a slight distinction is drawn, though not one which involves anything that can be called a title. It is more respectful to speak of a lady by her patronymic as 'Gunhild Magnúsdóttir' than simply as 'Gunhild.' This answers to the state of things in old Rome as distinguished from old Greece. No Roman in the days of the republic or the early empire was called in any way that answered to 'Mr.,' 'Sir,' or 'Lord'; but there were distinctions of respect and familiarity in the use of the *prænomen*, *nomen*, and *cognomen*.

mén. This differs from Athens, where the smallest man could not call the greatest by anything but his own personal name. No one spake of 'Senior' or 'Dominus' Fabius or Cæsar; but it was not everybody who was entitled to call the great man Quintus or Gaius. At Athens, on the other hand, the smallest man could not call Periklès anything but Periklès; there was nothing else to call him. Koisyra was a very fine lady and gave herself great airs, but the meanest woman or man had nothing to call her except Koisyra. A Roman lady under the commonwealth was in a somewhat different case. She had really no personal name at all. All the daughters of every man of the Cornelian *gens* were of necessity called Cornelia and nothing else. There is a tradition that women had *prænomena* in very early times, of which the tales of Acca Laurentia and Gaia Cæcilia are examples. But the fashion went out of use till Sulla, who gave his son the hitherto unheard of *prænomen* of Faustus, also called his daughter Fausta. In the early empire the custom strengthened, and we get sisters of the same family called, one Drusilla, another Livia, another Agrippina. These were indeed not strictly *prænomena*, but they were practically used as such. The whole history of Roman names is very curious, but its details do not concern us. All that we now need bear in mind is that in course of time the elaborate system of Roman nomenclature died out, and men and women stood, each one with his or her single personal name, say Gordian and Silvia the parents of Gregory the Great, ready for a new system of surnames and titles gradually to grow up.

Still the difference between Greek and Roman usage calls for a word or two. For the Roman usage, as compared with the Greek, though it does not involve any use of titles, is yet a step in that direction; it is an offshoot of the same feeling out of which the use of titles sprang. We may perhaps be tempted to say that the less ceremonious way of speaking at Athens and the more ceremonious way of speaking at Rome are due to the democratic feelings of the one commonwealth and the aristocratic feelings of the other. And this is true in a sense, though only in an indirect sense. There does not seem to have been any distinction in this matter between the aristocratic and the democratic commonwealths of Greece. As nobody at Athens could call Periklès anything but Periklès, so nobody at Corinth could call Timoleôn anything but Timoleôn. But the difference is due to a cause which had much to do with keeping up the aristocratic spirit and aristocratic feelings at Rome. Nothing is so truly

aristocratic as a surname, or more strictly a gentile name. No dukedom or principality is half so noble a thing as to bear of good right the name of Papirius or Dandolo or Montmorency. With all our notions about old families, this truth has less force in England than anywhere. We have no strictly gentile names, no *nomina*, only *cognomina* of comparatively late origin. The gentile system flourishes among the Celts both of Scotland and Ireland. Among the English it died out almost in the moment of our settlement in Britain. In Greece the *gens* was never forgotten; a man knew that he was an Alkmaionid, and everybody else knew it also; but he did not always carry the name of his *gens* about with him, as the Roman Julius or Cornelius did. But it is plain that, in the earlier days of Rome, the *prænomen* was the description in common use. As late as Polybios, we read of Publius and Titus rather than of Scipio and Flaminius, or even of Cornelius and Quinctius. It is exactly the same with ourselves; the Christian name, the usual way of describing a man in early times, has been driven out by the surname. One can hardly doubt that the later use of the *nomen* and *cognomen* at Rome, of the surname in England, instead of the *prænomen* or Christian name, is a mark of the same feeling which gives birth to titles. It comes of a wish to call a man by something less purely personal than the name which distinguishes him among his own kin. We have not brought ourselves so near to a man if we call him Scipio or Cæsar as if we call him Publius or Gaius. And the singular fact of the *prænomen* utterly dying out in the case of women may be a further carrying out of the same principle. It was not respectful to call a patrician lady anything more purely personal than Julia or Cornelia; Gaia or Publia would be too familiar. There is something slightly analogous among ourselves. A man has three ways of calling another man, according to degrees of acquaintance; a woman has only two ways of calling another woman. There is the threefold choice of 'Mr. Smith,' 'Smith,' and 'John.' But for his wife or daughter there is nothing between 'Mrs.' or 'Miss Smith' and 'Mary.' No one addresses a woman, except in some cases of domestic servants, as 'Smith.' Hence comes the odd phenomenon that wives solemnly address one another by their title of 'Mrs.,' while their husbands call one another by their plain surnames. If they do not call one another 'Mrs.,' they have nothing to fall back on but 'Mary' and 'Jane;' and their husbands do not call one another 'John' and 'Thomas.'

Old Greece then stuck without swerving to the practice of

calling every human being simply by his or her personal name. Ancient Rome swerved, even modern Iceland has swerved, more or less from this rule by allowing degrees of respect to be marked by different uses of the name or names which a man bore. Modern England, and the other nations of modern Europe and America, have swerved yet further. That is, they have gone on to the use of titles, that is to the use of some addition or other to a man's name, the object of which is to depart yet more widely from the familiarity of calling him by his mere personal name and nothing else. To forsake the man's own name for the name of his *gens* or family, a name less personal and which may so largely minister to family pride, is one step. To use an actual title instead of either is a step further. This last step we may say the elder Greek and Roman world never took. Setting aside the East, which might however supply us with some useful illustrations, the custom, as it now stands, has been a gradual creation of mediæval and modern Europe.

Titles, as now in use, fall naturally into three classes. First there are what we may call descriptive titles, titles which, in themselves and by the ordinary use of language, tell you something about the man. They directly mark his rank or office; as rank grew out of office, they all at first simply expressed office. But titles of office have come so largely to be given to men who do not actually discharge the office that the notion of office has in many cases passed out of sight altogether. In other cases it still keeps its force. The Duke no longer necessarily commands armies. The Earl no longer necessarily governs a shire. The Marquess no longer necessarily guards a frontier. Indeed, as regards the Duke and the Marquess, we may say that their titles in their later use, as expressing degrees in the peerage, never had any practical meaning in England. *Dux* was in old times a common Latin translation of the English *Ealdorman* or *Eorl*, and, at a later time, we had practical marquesses in the Lords-marchers. But the titles of Duke and Marquess, as now used, came in ready made from the continent in the fourteenth century, as mere honorary titles devised to express a rank higher than that of the ancient English Earl. But they had been practical titles, expressing real office, in other countries at earlier times. The Earl himself had, by the time dukes and marquesses came in, become an officer as nominal as themselves; but the fact that he had once been a real officer could hardly have been forgotten. The official earldom, or some

traces of it, lived on long, and died out slowly. The Knight again, *Rider, Chevalier, Miles*, has largely fallen away from his duty of fighting his lord's battles on horseback. But his original business is not so utterly forgotten as that of his superiors in rank. The mere fact that some kinds of knighthood are looked on in some cases as a little out of place is proof enough that the older notion of knighthood lives on at least as a survival.

Titles of hereditary peerage, one may say, have long worked themselves out of all official, and therefore out of all professional, character. Only of late there has been something like the revival of a kind of professional peerage in the persons of certain of the law-lords. We have now some members of the House of Lords whose position is not exactly the same either as the purely official peerage of the bishop or as the purely hereditary peerage of the temporal lord. But this modern change hardly affects the class. The titles of the temporal peer have become mere titles of honour. They are official only so far as a peerage is in itself a hereditary office; they are not official in the sense in which the titles of an ancient duke who commanded an army, or an ancient marquess who guarded a frontier, were official. But, though mere titles of honour, they are not bare titles; they are still descriptive; they still tell you something about their bearers; they at least tell you the rank which they bear. They therefore do what plain 'Mr.'—whose bearer may be either a small tradesman or the heir-presumptive to a dukedom—does not do. In short, while plain 'Mr.' is a mere title, a mere shift to avoid the simple use of the personal name, 'Duke,' though a title, is not a mere title; for it makes known a fact.

The history of each title, if treated in detail, would bring out a vast deal of curious matter for which we have no space now. At a few of the main points we have glanced. And there are some singularities in the use of each which are worth noticing. The forms 'Lord Marquess,' 'Lord Viscount,' seem now to have gone quite out of use; but they have done so within living memory. But it may be doubted whether anybody ever spoke in the same way of 'Lord Earl,' and assuredly no one ever so spoke of 'Lord Baron.' 'Lord Marquess' was, I suspect, simply meant to distinguish the Marquess himself from the 'Lady Marquess;' for the form of 'Marchioness' is much younger. It is like the modern French 'Impératrice' for the older 'Emperesse.' The Lord Marquess needed to be distinguished from the Lady Marquess, just as Lord Francis or Frances needed to be distinguished from Lady

Francis or Frances, before *Francesco* and *Francesca* were distinguished in English spelling. 'Lord Viscount,' I fancy, was meant to distinguish the *Vicecomes* who was a peer from the *Vicecomes* who was not, namely the Sheriff. But the Earl needed not to be thus distinguished from any other bearer of his title nor from his own wife. But mark that the antiquity of the Earl is shown by his wife having no English title; the Earl's wife was simply 'the Earl's wife,' till *comitissa*, *countess*, came in with the Normans. 'Lord Viscount' also, if my explanation of it is correct, shows the growth of the feeling which has come, sometimes inaccurately, to connect the title of 'Lord' with peerage. One of our oddest singularities in these matters is the way in which, in informal language, all ranks of the peerage under the highest are jumbled together under the common form of *Lord* and *Lady*. In the lowest rank of peerage, that of Baron, the formal description is in truth never heard, except either in very formal language indeed or where a woman holds a barony in her own right. The Baron alone, among the ranks of peerage, can hardly be called official, except so far as peerage itself is an office. His title rather marks a rank or class than an office; it does not at once point out even the memory of distinct functions, like those of the Duke, the Marquess, and the Earl.

But, setting aside the Baron, we see that all the other titles of peerage are in their origin strictly official, though some of them never had any official meaning in England. *Earl* once described a man's duties just as plainly as *Bishop* and *Justice* do still. The real cause of the difference is simply that the office of earl gradually became hereditary, which the offices of bishop and justice never did. What shall we say of the *Prince*? It must never be forgotten that the fashion of calling all the children of a king *Prince* and *Princess* is a very modern fashion indeed, which came in only with the illustrious House of Hanover. To be quite safe, it might be better to say the fashion of calling them princes while they are alive. It would need some research to say how soon they began to be called princes after they were dead. For to this day some people who are not princes while they are alive become princes when they are dead. No one speaks or thinks of a living duke or marquess as a prince; but he becomes a prince in the mouth of the herald when his style is proclaimed at his funeral. And to speak of 'princes' vaguely as a class is another thing from calling this and that king's son 'Prince A.' or B. This last is certainly most modern. The old title of

Ætheling barely survived the Norman Conquest, and when that died out, no other came in its place. A king's sons and daughters were vaguely *Dominus, Domina, Sir, Lord, Lady*. There is no more stupid confusion of history than to carry the modern fashion back into times when it was unknown, to speak, for instance, of Earl John in Richard the First's time as 'Prince John.' Even as late as George the Second's day, plain Englishmen talked of 'Lady Caroline' and 'Lady Emily,' while courtiers talked of 'Princess Caroline' and 'Princess Amelia.' But the eldest son and the eldest daughter, that is those among the king's children who enjoy certain privileges by law, stand on a different footing. The eldest daughter was certainly called 'Princess' long before her sisters, and she was probably so called by a kind of analogy with her eldest brother. He of course is really Prince, at least in theory, Prince of the Dominion of Wales. At least it is usual for his father so to create him; he is not Prince of Wales by actual right of birth, as he is Duke of Cornwall.

The higher titles then, from *Prince* to *Viscount*, are official titles which have lost their official meaning. But they are still descriptive; they still tell us a good deal about the man who bears them. Other titles, in the law, the Church, the army, are still strictly official. 'Mr. Justice A.', 'Colonel B.', and 'Archdeacon C.', tell you at once what office a man holds, and the title is never given to any man who does not hold the office. The only difference is that we still say 'Mr. Justice,' while we do not say 'Mr. Colonel,' and no longer say 'Mr. Archdeacon,' except in the vocative. The French idiom, more consistently, would put 'Monsieur' before all, as it does before anything else, higher or lower. There is 'M. le Duc' and there is 'M. le Curé,' to say nothing of 'MM. les Ouvriers.' With us the question is, which among official descriptions shall be stuck before a man's surname by way of titles, and which shall not. German and American usage unties this knot by calling every man who has the slightest shadow of official rank by its official description. Everybody is Judge, Colonel, Professor, or something or other. English usage is fluctuating and inconsistent. Polite practice has decreed the extinction of many titles or *quasi*-titles which still linger on untutored lips. On the other hand, modern usage has called some into being which were unheard of in the youth of men who are not yet old. Perhaps it is the natural tendency of mankind to call everybody by his calling or office. 'Squire,' 'Parson,' 'Lawyer,' 'Farmer,' have not quite ceased to be used in this way,

I have heard a man described quite seriously as 'Barber A.' This formula is quite distinct from another and an older one which played a great part in the formation of surnames. The forms 'John taylor,' 'William cook,' and a crowd of others, grew directly into the surnames Taylor and Cook. The formula is indeed the same as the old 'Cnut King,' 'Harold Earl'; but that style went out very early in the case of the greater offices. It was only the lesser official callings that were left to form surnames; and a further change placed the lesser description also before the name. Among more modern descriptions, one branch of the legal profession seems to have as great a dislike to be called counsellors as the other has to be called attorneys; yet it is not so very long since 'Attorney A.' was in common use, and 'Counsellor B.' was not only in common use, but had, one would have thought, rather a stately sound. 'Mr. Serjeant' abides, as the description of a class of men who seem likely to die out; but the Queen's Counsel is never distinguished by anything before his name, but only by letters after it. 'Alderman A.' is in use everywhere; but we never talk of 'Mayor B.', as they do in America, except sometimes in the case of a deceased Lord Mayor of London. This is perhaps because the office of alderman is more abiding than that of mayor. On the whole, if we look to letters or novels of the last century, I think we shall find that descriptions of office and calling were far more generally in use as titles than they are now. That is to say, the practice of England then came nearer than it does now to the present practice of Germany and America.

But the present age has quite restored the balance in one department, namely the ecclesiastical one. A venerable and memorable man died not long ago who had for years been a living protest against modern changes in this matter. All the world has heard of 'Dr. Pusey.' Did any man ever hear of 'Canon Pusey,' or 'Professor Pusey'? The words 'Professor Pusey' may be found in a forgotten pamphlet by one who was anxious to be called 'Professor' himself; and it is said that the words 'Canon Pusey' appeared, for the first time of their use by human lips or a human pen, in one newspaper report of Dr. Pusey's funeral. In this there was nothing peculiar to Dr. Pusey; he was simply the last survivor of his generation; his contemporaries were always spoken of in the same way as Dr. Bull, Dr. Barnes, and the like. But their successors are now called, quite jauntily, 'Canon A.' and 'Canon B.' It is always Canon, one may remark, rather

than 'Professor.' It was an amusing and unconscious mark of change to see the other day in a newspaper that the life of 'Dr. Pusey' was in writing by 'Canon Liddon.' The author of the biography is, or lately was, just like its subject, at once doctor, canon, and professor; but it did not come into the newspaper-writer's head to inflict on the elder man the style of yesterday which he did inflict on the younger. It is indeed a strange result of lessening the number of cathedral and collegiate stalls that, ever since that change, the land has swarmed with canons as it never did in any earlier age. The capitular members of the new foundations used to be called prebendaries; but nobody talked of 'Prebendary A.'; they were satisfied to be 'Mr.' or 'Dr.,' as might happen. Now their style is 'Canon,' and every one of them is called 'Canon' this or that. A witty canon of Saint Paul's, a learned prebendary of Saint Peter's, would have thought it strange to be called 'Canon Smith' and 'Prebendary Milman'; their successors are all 'Canon' this and that. But it is only now and then that 'Canon A. and B.,' whom we stumble upon daily, hold any such historic post as those held by a Pusey, a Milman, or a Sydney Smith. Such a canon is far more likely to be a brand-new creation of the nineteenth century, an honorary canon of Manchester or Liverpool. Nay, minor canons and priest vicars, if they do not call themselves 'Canon B.,' are sometimes well pleased if anybody else will call them so. The disease has even spread to an ancient and highly honourable class, the prebendaries or non-residentiary canons of the old foundations. They cannot be left behind all the rest, and they too figure, sometimes as 'Canon A.,' sometimes as 'Prebendary B.' Some of them perhaps deserve the nickname. I have heard an old-foundation prebendary speak of himself on a public platform as an 'honorary canon.' The climax of all is when, not a simple canon but a dignitary of some ancient church, say a Precentor of Lincoln or a Chancellor of Lichfield, stoops to be spoken of in the ruck, like the last honorary canon from Newcastle.

It is certainly hard to see why one clergyman should be spoken of as 'Canon A.' while his neighbour is not spoken of as 'Rector B.' By the German or American rule both should be spoken of by their office; by English usage till a few years back, both should be satisfied with 'Dr.' or 'Mr.' There are plenty of ways of letting out that a man is a canon or a rector besides binding the description of his office as a frontlet on his brow. A layman who has no ambition to proclaim at every moment of his life

either that he holds some local office or that some honorary compliment has been paid to him, finds it hard to enter into the fancy for being called 'Canon,' especially when the man so called is not a real and full canon, but only some kind of canon with a difference. But it is clear that the title is very dear to the clerical mind, dear above all to the mind of honorary canons. I heard one of their clerical brethren the other day, not to be sure a canon himself, speak somewhat scornfully of some who 'love to be called of men, Canon, canon.' In our present survey the matter only concerns us in so far as the variety of usage and the change of usage illustrate the inconsistency of English practice in this matter. But it should not be forgotten that, along with this remarkable flight of canons in the Church, there has come a no less remarkable flight of professors in the Universities and elsewhere. They have so often to be spoken of that they cannot always be written at full length. In the pages of the 'Academy,' for instance, 'Prof. A' is ever disputing with 'Prof. B.' There are, to be sure, new-fangled kinds of professors, just as there are new-fangled kinds of canons, and the new-fangled kinds may perhaps like to be called 'Professor.' But it is hard to see why a real professor in an ancient university, who may be supposed to be known as a master of some branch of knowledge, whose name, one would think, ought to be enough, should care to be labelled in this sort, like an ambitious minor canon. Anyhow the practice is spreading. The most sensible professors, like the most sensible canons, say that they do not want to be called 'Professor;' but people call them 'Professor' all the same.

There are also, in our more minute dealings with ecclesiastical and academical dignitaries, one or two delicate observances, which are apt to puzzle strangers. I remember the odd effect of a letter to the head of a college in Oxford, addressed, in the way that in America is polite, to 'President A.' We never say 'President A.' We may say Mr. or Dr. A., or 'The President of' such a college, according to circumstances; but 'President A.' on no account. That is as long as he is alive; for, in showing the buildings of the college, we should say that such a part was built by 'President B.' This is of course simply for shortness, to say that A. B. built the building and that A. B. was President. But we constantly say 'Archdeacon A.' He is never cut down to Mr. or Dr., and it is only in rather formal language that we say 'The Archdeacon of' such a place. But the Dean is always 'The Dean of' so-and-so; unless when, as in a

review, he has to be mentioned several times and the full description becomes wearisome. Then he may sink into 'Dean A.' or even 'Dr. A.' This may be because the Dean commonly stands by himself in the diocese, while of archdeacons there commonly are several. The last new thing in ecclesiastical titles is the 'Bishop Designate.' Or rather he is not the last new thing, for several still newer things have been formed after his likeness, down even to a 'Curate Designate.' The 'Bishop Designate' is a creature of advertisements. I perfectly well remember his beginnings. Some publisher was advertising the writings of a clergyman named, but not yet consecrated, to some Irish or colonial see. His proper description of course was 'Bishop-elect;' but the advertiser fancied that there could not be a Bishop-elect where there was only one elector, so he invented the name of 'Bishop Designate.' The thing took; only the name presently changed its meaning. It is now used in the case of an ordinary English bishop to express a stage earlier than 'Bishop-elect,' a stage namely when no legal or ecclesiastical step has yet been taken to make him into a bishop. The Bishop Designate is one who has simply received a letter from the Prime Minister, which as yet makes no difference whatever in his actual legal or ecclesiastical position, though it certainly makes it highly probable that he will before long be recommended by the Crown, elected by the chapter, and confirmed and consecrated by the Metropolitan. Long before even the first of those steps has been taken, people now call him 'Bishop Designate' quite gravely, as if it were an established legal or canonical description, instead of the device of an advertiser not many years back. I have seen the nickname used in a formal university notice, and I saw the other day in the 'Court Circular' something about the 'Dean of Windsor Designate.' The oddest thing of all was a serious discussion in a newspaper as to 'the legal *status* of a Bishop Designate,' as if there really was such a creature *in rerum natura*.

And now comes the case of the wives of those persons, great and small, who bear titles which are or were names of office. In England we are rather hard upon them. We have already noticed that the English Earl has no Englishwoman of like title to accompany him; he is accompanied by a French Countess. He thus stands distinguished from the Duke and the Viscount, who are themselves French as well as their wives. The truth is that no purely English title of office has or ever had a feminine form. In early times it never came into any man's head that a man's purely official position

could be shared by his wife. Let us begin at the top. The King's wife was called *Regina* in Latin from the beginning; but there is no English word answering to *Regina*; we have not, and never had, any word like the German *Königin*. The *Queen* is simply *queen* (*cwen*), woman, wife—the highest of wives in her husband's kingdom. So the earl's wife was simply the earl's wife; the Norman style of *Countess* came in to fill up what was now thought a defect. So with all strictly English titles, *Knight*, *Sheriff*, *Portreeve*, *Alderman*. They have no feminines; in most cases the wife does not share her husband's dignity. But the *Mayor*, bearing a French title, has his *Mayoress*, just as the Duke has his *Duchess*. The Mayoress is a singular exception to the almost universal law that any dignity which still remains really official is not shared by the wife. A newly-appointed Lord Chancellor takes his place above dukes; his wife, the junior baroness, is far from taking her place above duchesses. Indeed his place would be exactly the same were he not created a peer at all, so that his wife would remain the wife of a mere knight or esquire. Great is the abiding dignity of the Bishop of the diocese; greater still the passing dignity of the Sheriff of the county. But their wives have no share in their glories; they remain the wives of esquires, gentlemen by coat-armour, or gentlemen by profession, as may happen. It is certainly striking that, while a duke yields precedence to an archbishop, the archbishop's wife, if she be simply the archbishop's wife, ought to yield precedence to the daughters of a knight. But this extreme case is the natural carrying out of a law from which the Mayoress alone has contrived to set herself free. How she found the means to obtain this freedom, it is for municipal antiquaries to tell us.

Now in this matter we stand opposed to the practice both of Germany and of America. The language which has made a feminine for *König* has made a feminine for most lesser titles. There is a 'Frau Professorin,' just as there is, or was, a 'Madame la Maréchale.' American practice, unable to coin feminines with the same ease, gives us 'Mrs. Senator' and 'Mrs. Professor.' Such descriptions are not now thought polite in England. But I suspect that they are simply obsolete. It might be worth the while of some one who has time for such minute researches to find out when they came in and when they died out.

Thus far we have been dealing with titles, great and small, all of which were in their origin strictly official. And we have been dealing with titles all of which take a substantive shape. But

We have by no means exhausted the substantives, and the subject of adjective titles we have not touched at all. Another time we may find something to say on both classes, both the titles which are not strictly official and the adjective titles or honorary epithets. Nor must we forget a class perhaps more curious than either, what we may call titles of circumlocution. All these have something in common with one another, and distinct from that class of titles which in the beginning were simple descriptions of office.

EDWARD A. FREEMAN.

(To be concluded.)

The Last Words of Cleanthes.

B.C. 220.

SCENE :—*The sea-shore of Assos, in Troas.*

‘**H**ERE do I take my seat, Great Element !
And for the last time listen to thy voice,
Which now methinks hath a more lulling tone,
E’en as of sympathy : but that’s a dream.

‘ Many great spirits dwell in other worlds,
And some are here, who live, like me, alone,
But with a recognized influence of good,
Rewarded by self-consciousness of power,
Which is the Stoic’s well-sufficing law :
It is his law unto himself, comprising
All kinds of labour ; water, food, and space
Of ground sufficient where to rest the head,
Being his right in common with the herds,
And all dumb fellow-creatures of the earth.

‘ Zeno is gone ; and I have taught his School,
With pride I yet may pardon in myself,
Knowing how much of his great soul, outpoured
For all, throughout my being was transfused.
Zeno hath passed to higher learning now,
And thence to higher teachings will attain,
Proportion’d to his spirit towering still ;
While I have linger’d here, and day and night
Striven to be worthy of his great bequest.’

The sage was seated on a lone sea-coast,
And while the sun slow sank ’midst solemn smiles,
As of paternal sadness, touch’d with hope,
The sea came flowing up, still murmuring
Its ever-fresh yet ancient harmonies.

Near him there stands a Thracian youth, whose head
And limbs elastic had enchain'd the gaze,
But for the anxious chisellings o'er his face,
As he beholds a man of massive brow,
O'ersnow'd by four score years, who like a rock
Placed on a rock, sits there, self-doom'd to die.

‘Young man, thou pray'st me to recount my life—
New comer from the Thracian Chersonese,
Not knowing of my labours, or my thoughts,
Nor why I sit here with intent to end
A long life, every day whereof hath wrought
The utmost work my faculties could achieve;
Here, where the bright waves hasten tow'rd's my feet,
Not like fierce rows of fangs, but gracious friends
Who bring to me my flowing funeral rites,
Murmuring their deep hymns to eternity.

‘I was a rough-bred and unletter'd man,
Born to great strength of sinew and of bone,
With that endurance which outlives defeat;
And as a cestus-bearing athlete fought,
Gaining some batter'd victories, with the applause
Of brutal natures, and of spirits refined,
Needing reaction after mental toils.
With heavy ox-thonged cestus, newly stained
From smashing contest, craving rest and shade,
The grove I pass'd where Zeno held his School.
The vision of that grand head floats before me,
As then it loom'd above the shoulders bare,
And grape-like curls of many a lovely youth
Whose soaring spirit stood with folded wings.

‘The hush'd repose—the shadows,—and the rhythm
Of Zeno's eloquent cadences—a flow
Of harmony as of the confluence sweet
When Simois and Xanthus murmur'd through
Some temple in the groves of vanish'd Troy,
Melted my nerves, and overcame my heart,
Till a new life-spring gushed into my brain,
Flooding my thoughts, and forcing o'er each sense
A change, which all my bodily strength transformed,

More than a child's within a giant's grasp,
Or clay beneath the statuary's hand.
Softly I laid me listening on the grass,—
And year by year, ne'er absent, day by day,
Save for deep study in my lone abode,
As one of Zeno's flock I fed and thought.

' Now while the days roll'd o'er my bowed-down head,
My corporal needs—how few—were well supplied
By labours of the night, wherein my strength
Served well my higher craving; and for hinds
On gardens, farms, or cattle far a-field,
Water I drew from wells, or when the springs
Sparkled in frosty silver 'neath the moon.

' Thus through my mind were melted twenty years,
And Zeno left us—on life's pilgrimage
Tow'rds higher knowledge;—and his Chair devolved
On me, though others to that lofty seat
Held worthier claim. As Polygnotus' hand
In paintings illustrated godlike forms,
And acts of heroes, so did I but teach,
With humbler, but not less devoted powers,
What godlike minds had imaged. Let that pass
From me, the medium of those truths sublime,
To rest as crowns for their diviner brows.

' And yet, young man, I have not lived in vain
In mine own person, since examples weighty
Rank with best teachings. Now, brief words paint years:—
The tide rolls inward, and thou must depart,
And leave me here to close my mortal hour.
Through a long life I have thoroughly wrought my will,
From Nature's hand refusing all rich fruits,
As from my labours, or man's kindliness,
Receiving but the means for innocent food,
Thus following Crates' and great Zeno's course,
As rigidly as link doth follow link,
When seamen raise an anchor to the prow;
Or as the shadow of the hero's spear
Beneath its singing, flies to the same mark.
To man's best knowledge, and his highest good

Myself have I devoted evermore,
 With no weak murmurings o'er the poverty
 Which was my choice. And if my chief return
 From man were scoffs, cold pity, or neglect,
 As I for social life were all unfit—
 No business had on earth—let man progress
 The better for my life ; I, none the worse
 For his contempt, but more content and glad
 In that my labours have been more removed
 From personal profit. My pure 'vantage rests
 On its negation and its nullity,
 Which is the Stoic's true—his best reward,
 Save in the satisfaction of his soul.
 It may be that some balance here is lost,
 Since Nature bids each seek his proper good.
 Every devotion hath inspiring madness—
 Oft madness of the loftiest, purest scope ;
 But 'tis poor earthliness large gains to crave,
 Thanks, and prompt recognition from the world
 Of service and self-sacrifice. Enough—
 Man knows his own acts, his own secret mind,—
 Evades, or all the mingled truths confronts.

'Leave me, young man ; the tide is rising fast !
 Good youth, retire—'tis now my will to die.
 Studies and hardships on extreme age piling
 Weight upon weight, life's arches are borne down ;
 And as nought useless can, or should exist,
 I have, for days, all sustenance refused,
 Press'd to my hands, but thankfully laid down,
 And now sit here, beside my sand-scoop'd grave,
 Waiting majestic burial from the sea.

'Nor are tombs wanting. Lo, yon marble rocks !—
 The architectures of some hand Divine !
 Intaglios fretted by a thousand years—
 Inscriptions motto'd by the unseen Powers
 That guide earth's great mutations ; while around me
 The symbols both of present and of past—
 Enormous sea-weeds, strombites, and whitening bones,
 Submarine flowers that lift their welcoming heads,
 And wail of starv'd birds echoing to the moon,

Now slowly rising from her daily grave,
 Profusely furnish funeral honours due
 To those whose life-lamps burnt in caves, like mine.
 Young man ! forbear thy touch !—thy tearful voice—
 Begone at once ! behold the waves flow near,
 And soon will kiss these pale and paralyzed feet.
 The crescent points creep round with gushing gleams,
 And now they eddying meet, and deepening flow !

‘Covering his face, with smother’d sobs he goes—
 Farewell !—nay, boy !—he weeps, but he is gone.
 Ever-young World ! I have well loved thy youth,
 And thought for me thou hadst no heart at all ;
 But ’twas not so. I ne’er had sought to gain
 That sympathy which yet, like unpluck’d fruit,
 Is ready for the worthy traveller’s hand.
 Absorb’d in work for man, men I forgot,
 With all their cherished trivialities ;
 Wherefore they view’d me as a thing apart.

I.

‘O Zeus ! I bless thee for the life thou gavest,
 So full of bodily strength, and health, and years ;
 I bless thee for the mind that hath no fears
 Of death, whereby our atoms thou still savest,
 Till some fine consciousness again appears.

II.

‘O Zeus ! I have doubted further gifts of Gods—
 Doubted futurity for each special mind ;
 The soul, like music, dying on the wind ;
 The body merging in earth’s sands and sods ;—
 But to thy Ruling evermore resigned.

III.

‘O Zeus ! no claim have we to aught beyond !
 We bless thee for the life we have enjoyed ;
 We hope our spirit shall not be destroyed :
 Thy waters to my dying Hymn respond
 In harmonies that change, ere rapture-cloyed

IV.

'O Zeus! I hear the broad waves gently flowing
Over my feet, and nestling round my knees!
My senses melt away by soft degrees!
My thoughts, like seeds, thy hand afar is sowing!
Sweet songs are in my brain—sweet birds in trees!

V.

'O Zeus! at all-devouring Time I smile;
For he is but Heaven's little playful son,
Toying, or teasing, while we graveward run:
Flow then, ye waves!—our mingling sands beguile!
Flow on, divine Maternity, flow on!'

RICHARD HENGIST HORNE.

Poker Principles and Chance Laws.

OUR literature is permeated with words and expressions derived from the times when all men, or all save the few who knew and reasoned on what they knew, believed in the influences of the stars. We read of this man that at such and such a time his fortunes were in the ascendant, of another that he was in the zenith of his fame; we hear of fortunate and evil aspects, of Mercurial, Jovial, Martial, or Saturnine dispositions; and if our modern historians do not actually tell us that the stars in their courses fight for or against the men of whom they write, they use expressions whose real meaning is derived from the old belief that the stars were set in the heavens to be for signs and portents to mankind. But if our literature is full of astrological verbiage, the lighter literature of a great nation speaking the same language as ours is becoming still more markedly characterised by words and expressions drawn from games of chance, and especially from one game which seems likely to displace all others among gambling men. The common speech of America is impregnated with the verbiage of Poker—a significant circumstance truly, if we consider that it implies the universal recognition of this as the national game, and remember what the game is.

It is singular, indeed, to note how the human race have throughout all ages been attracted—as moths round a fire that will destroy them—by the belief in luck. It is this that underlies all systems of prediction—faith in happy stellar influences, belief in fortunate palm-markings, trust in omens, and, in our own time, the gambler's confidence in his luck. Faith in good luck that will stay, conviction that bad luck will change, these rival absurdities have in all ages led men astray. They have been the will-of-the-wisp of the foolish; but to the swindlers who take advantage of their fellow-men's weakness, these delusions have been a veritable stock-in-trade.

The game of Poker has attained in America the dignity of a science. A recent writer speaks of 'the idea' of this game as 'higher than that of any other game of cards. For,' by its

various devices, 'which may be regulated by strict scientific principles, . . . it elevates the idea of speculative combination to the greatest possible dignity in connection with mental pastime. The forces that in their resultant have created Draw-poker are all well-indicated and healthy mental efforts; and the sum total is appreciated by the best intellects in the United States, as the most interesting game of cards that the human mind has yet produced.' So says Mr. John Blackbridge, actuary and counsellor-at-law, in his treatise on 'The Complete Poker Player'; and what he says may be matched by a note which an English writer has appended to Ben Jonson's 'Every Man in his Humour,' where, speaking of a kindred game, the writer says that to understand it 'would employ all the time and more than all the wits of the modern profession; gambling was then a science, and a young man could not well be ruined by it without an attempt at least to exercise his faculties.'

The existence and still more the flourishing condition of such a game as poker, outside mere gambling dens, is one of the most portentous phenomena of American civilisation, though it is not in this aspect that I propose just now to consider it; for the art which chiefly avails to help the gambler in playing this game is nothing more nor less than that art of which the enemy of man is proverbially said to be the father. Poker has an advantage over whist in one respect. In whist skill will do somewhat; but it will not avail to make good cards yield to bad ones. In poker the case is otherwise. A man shall have not a point in his hand; yet by sheer bluffing—in other words, by lying—he shall cause such an idea to be formed of his hand, that everyone else at the table will throw up his cards, and leave to the liar full possession of the stakes. Yet, as Lawrence in 'Guy Livingstone,' and Hawley Smart in half-a-dozen novels, describe with approval the success of daring swindles, so the enthusiastic poker-player will tell you with pride of achievements in bluffing which can only be viewed in one way by men of honour.

The game of poker is sufficiently simple, though as usual the explanation given by those who play it is obscure in the extreme. To everyone in the circle five cards are dealt in the usual way. The eldest hand—*i.e.*, the player next the dealer on the left—stakes a sum, which must be doubled by all who intend to stay in; the eldest hand doubling his original stake if he decides to stay in, otherwise forfeiting it. When this is done all who stay in have staked an equal sum. Each player may (in their regular

turn only) increase his stake, in which case all who wish to stay must 'see' him—that is, raise their stake in the same degree, or go better—that is, raise the stake further. When all are equally in, each of the players can throw out any of his cards, and draw as many more, to improve his hand. This done, the real business begins. In due rotation the players left in raise the stake, or follow in 'seeing' it—that is, in bringing up their stakes to the increased value. This may go on, and generally does go on, till each has staked a large sum. If a sum is named which a player is unwilling to 'see,' he lays down his hand. If all the other players are unwilling to 'see' a bet, they all throw down their hands, and the bettor takes the pool without showing his hand. But when the bet goes round to the last player remaining in, and he does not wish to go better, he may simply 'see it' and 'call'; on which all playing must show their hands, and the best hand wins the pool.

On the rules which determine the value of the several hands depend whatever qualities the game of poker has as a game of skill. Just as in *vingt-et-un*, hazard, and like games, there are certain rules of probability which ought to guide the player (if he must gamble), so also in poker there are rules, though they very little affect the play of the average poker-player, while the really skilled professors of this cheerful game pay no attention to them whatever.

The points which give a hand value are the presence of cards of the same denomination (as a *pair*, or two of the same denomination; *triplets*, or three of a kind; and *fours*, or four of a kind); *sequence*—that is, all the cards in the hand being in sequence, as 9, 10, knave, queen, king; a *flush*, or all the cards of the same suit. The lowest kind of hand is one which has none of these points; such a hand is estimated against others of the same kind by the highest card in it (the value of the cards being as in whist). Next in value is a hand with one pair in it; next a hand with two pairs (different pairs, of course); next a hand with three cards of the same denomination, called 'threes'; next a sequence hand; next a flush hand; then a *full hand*—that is, a hand containing one pair and one triplet; then *fours*, a hand containing four cards of the same denomination; and, lastly, that is highest and best of all, a *flush sequence*—that is, a sequence of high cards all of the same suit. In every case where two hands are of the same kind, the cards of highest denomination in the pair, triplet, four, flush, or sequence, wins. Thus a flush sequence of knave, 10, 9, 8, 7, beats a flush sequence

of 9, 8, 7, 6, 5; four aces beat four kings or four queens; a full of three aces and two deuces beats a full of three kings and two queens, but a full of three aces and two threes beats a full of three aces and two deuces; a flush of king, 7, 5, 3, 2, beats a flush of queen, knave, 10, 9, 7; and so on. In cases of 'tie' the stakes are divided.

It is clear that the game itself is as good as many which are played in the domestic circle. In such a game as *vingt-et-un*, for instance, where the players are all against the dealer, there is about the same element of chance and about the same room for the exercise of judgment that there is in a game of Poker which is to end with a call. But the bluffing element, which is what gives the game its real value to the gambling fraternity, is independent of any qualities possessed by Poker as a card game. Where there is no 'limit,' that is, no stated sum beyond which no bet must go), one can bluff as well, and almost as safely, over a bad hand as over a good one—if one possesses the requisite qualities of a false face and a steady nerve.

But I wish just now to consider the qualities which this game possesses as an exercise of the judgment. No judgment is shown by one who sits down to gamble at poker; but in the game itself there are points depending a good deal on judgment, and especially on a knowledge of the laws of chance. Here, oddly enough, the professional Poker-players have made, for the most part, little progress. We have before us the reasoning of one who claims to teach, calling his book 'The Complete Poker Player,' and we find not only much that is incorrect in theory, but an absolute failure to understand the real value of the principles of probability to the Poker proficient, and indeed to all who gamble. He deliberately tells us, in fact, that while theory shows the odds to be such and such, experience points to other odds, the real fact being that experience and theory are in most perfect accord in all matters of probabilities.

In the first place, the problems connected with the decision, whether to stay in or retire on a given hand, are very pretty. The case is entirely different from that to be dealt with in such a game as *vingt-et-un*, where only the dealer has to be considered, each player being as it were in contest with him. In Poker a player has to consider, not the chance of having a better hand than some particular adversary, but the chance that he holds better cards than *any* of the others. This modifies the chances

in a very interesting manner. Not only are they different from those existing where each player is matched against the dealer, but they vary according to the number of players. Where the players are few a moderately good hand may be trusted to win against the company, in the average of a great number of trials; but where there are many players there is more chance of a strong hand lying somewhere to beat it, and therefore, the hand in which the player should decide to trust must be a better one. For instance, with few players a pokerist might safely decide that he would not go in on less than a high pair, as kings or aces, and adhering to that rule throughout the play would be likely to come out without heavy loss. But if there were a large party of players, the average best hand at each deal would probably be better; and he might, therefore, deem it well to put low threes, as three fours or three fives, as the limit below which he would not back his hand. Apart from 'bluffing,' such rules are not affected by the probability that a 'call' may be made; for the persistence of other players in raising will depend on the quality of their hand.

But we touch here on a characteristic of this game of poker, which makes it a really excellent game for non-gamblers, because calling so largely on the exercise of judgment, and also depending so much on individual character. As a parlour game, with counters instead of coin, it is one of the best and most amusing I know of,—strangely contrasted with whist. It calls for the exercise of very different mental faculties, but brings out traits of character in quite as marked a degree.

Thus, some players have a faith in their good luck or a dread of their bad luck, which prevents them from following the guidance of the laws of probability. The sanguine will back hands (not now and then, but as a rule), which in the long run must fail him; while the despondent loses equally by failing to avail himself of the chances which the game throws in his way. Or, instead of this general tone of hopefulness on the one hand or of depression on the other, we find a readiness to believe that luck has set in, one way or the other, which equally leads to eventual disaster. A player shows faith in the nonsensical belief of the professional gamblers, that there are times when you are in the vein, and other times when the fates are against you. Or, he may believe that he is lucky in this or that seat, or with the deal, or on the dealer's right or left, unlucky in other situations,

or *vice versa*; or that special modes of cutting or shuffling are likely to be favourable or the reverse.

Very rarely does one meet a card-player, or indeed any man whatever, who does not hold some notions of this sort. Emerson has well said that weak men believe in luck, or in special interpositions of Providence, strong men consider cause and effect. It is true, but it is also true that most men are weak, and that many who are strong in the main have special weak points, so that most men believe in luck, and many even of those who are strong enough to recognise the utter absurdity—speaking generally of any faith in luck—have yet some weak point at which, even against their better sense, a foolish fancy holds them. Thus, I have known men who reject most of the absurdities about luck who would hesitate to take the cards of the losing partners at whist, when their cut has given them the right to choose their pack. Yet the notion is an absurdity of the most irrational kind that the cards which have won once will in any way improve the chances of the next holders. It is absolutely impossible to show any possible way in which the result can depend on the pack selected—except one, which certainly is not thought of among respectable card-players—viz. that the cards of one pack being in some way marked might give either partner or the enemy an unfair advantage.

That sort of luck which the old gambler Steinmetz called being 'in the vein,' is one of the strangest of all the wild fancies which have ever come to be regarded as sound doctrine. I touch on it here as particularly affecting the poker-player, but it is worth considering in itself. 'A prudent player,' says the notorious gambler just named, 'before undertaking anything, should put himself to the test to discover if he is "in vein" or "in luck;"' and then, two sentences farther on, 'before risking your money study your "vein," and the different probabilities of the game, termed as aforesaid, "the maturity of the chances."' Now, 'the maturity of the chances' is a principle discovered by gamblers, who must be clever men, seeing that no such principle exists—viz. this—that 'In a game of chance, the oftener the same combination has occurred in succession, the nearer we are to the certainty that it will not recur at the next cast or turn up.' This, says Steinmetz, is the most elementary of the theories on probabilities.

Now, in reality, an enormous fortune might be made by a swindler, who having carefully initiated a great number of

victims into this false faith, should proceed to wager with them on the precisely opposite principle. Thus, it is easy to persuade many people that the tossing of 'size' six times running is antecedently so improbable as to justify very long odds against a sixth throw of 'size' after five have been already thrown. The real odds of course are five to one; but one could easily persuade most persons that the true odds were ten to one at least. Now, if this were done, and similarly excessive odds were agreed upon where two, three, or four 'sizes' had been thrown, a series of wagers conducted on this principle would inevitably place a large sum in the pockets of the bettor who took the odds.

Let us see what would be sure to happen:—

First if the other bettor laid 100*l.* to 10*l.* against a sixth 'size' being thrown after five had been already thrown, no bets being made except when this had happened. Suppose that by patient continuance in dice-throwing a thousand, or say for convenience 1,200, cases of the kind occurred in a week or so. Then 1,200 times would 100*l.* to 10*l.* be laid against the appearance of a 'size' at the sixth throw. It is practically certain, however, in so large a number of trials that in about one-sixth of these 1,200 cases 'size' would be thrown. Thus, in about 200 cases the layer of the odds would have to pay 100*l.*, while in about 1,000 cases he would have to receive 10*l.*; thus he would win about 10,000*l.* and lose about 20,000*l.*, or lose a balance of about 10,000*l.*

Secondly, an arrangement might be made for the more convenient plucking of the unfortunate 'pigeon,' that after tossing any number of the six *once*, rather more than 5 to 1 should be laid against the same number appearing a second time; if it did, yet greater odds against it appearing a third time; and so on, until some limit had been reached, as five times, when, as in the other case, 10 to 1 (say) might be laid against its appearing a sixth time; after that the tossing to begin again on the same plan. The effect of this arrangement would be the same as the former whenever the same number was tossed five times in succession; but the cases where it failed to appear so often would be utilized by the taker of the odds to reduce his losses and increase his gains. Thus, suppose the odds laid in the several cases, instead of being what they should be, 5 to 1 in every case (against the tossing of any named number) were 6 to 1 after a number had appeared once, 7 to 1 after it had appeared twice, 8 to 1 after it had appeared thrice, 9 to 1 after it had appeared four times, and 10 to 1 after it had appeared five times, 10*l.* being always

wagered by the taker of the odds. Then in any case where the number failed to appear at the second trial, the taker of the odds would have to pay 10*l.*: this would happen in about five-sixths of the trials; when it only failed to appear at the third trial he would have to pay 10*l.*; but he would already have received 60*l.* for the second appearance of the number. Now, on the average, this would happen in one-sixth of the trials, so that he would probably clear 10*l.*, on the average, in every six trials, apart from any third throw. Of the third throws, about five in six would bring him loss, making 50*l.*, but one in six would, on the average, be successful, bringing him 70*l.*; so that for every six of these cases he would, on the average, clear 20*l.* on account of a successful third throw. But six of these trials would arise, on the average, in thirty-six trials in all, and these would give him about six wins at the second trial; or, as we have just seen, a profit of 60*l.*—making 80*l.* in all in every thirty-six trials on the average. So we proceed to the other cases. The average number of throws giving a successful sixth trial, would be $6 \times 6 \times 6 \times 6 \times 6$ or 7776. On the average, he would clear in these trials 50*l.* for the one successful throw six successive times, 6×40 or 240*l.* for six successful throws five successive times, 36×30 or 1,080*l.* for thirty-six successful throws four times in succession, 216×20 or 4,320*l.* for 216 successful throws three times in succession; and lastly, 1296×10 or 12,960*l.* for 1,296 successful throws twice in succession,—that is, in all, 18,650*l.* This is his clear average gain on 7,776 trials, and a very pretty gain it is. Yet there would not be the slightest difficulty in persuading ninety-nine people out of a hundred that such betting was perfectly fair throughout. The advice of a professional gambler, carefully followed, could lead only to disaster; but anyone acquainted with the laws of probability could (were *he* a professional swindler) make large profit out of his knowledge and the ignorance of others.

As a result of confidence in luck, either general or at any particular time, poker-players often trust in hands of far less value than such as would give a fair chance of winning. It never seems to occur to them that the possession of a bad hand should in itself be regarded, if the theory of luck were sound, as an evidence that at the moment they were not in the vein; and that the principle 'back your luck' would suggest that the hand should be thrown up, for backing it means backing bad luck.

Of course this does not apply to bluffing, which, however, is not considered good poker-playing, at least as a system. A player

may bluff on almost any hand, and the bolder his bluff the better his chance of winning; for his opponent has to pay to see his hand—he has, indeed, in a sense, not to pay but simply to stake so much money; but, according to the true doctrine of chances, staking means payment of a certain sum for a certain chance. Now, when a poker-player raises the stakes by a very large amount, he means, if he is not bluffing, ‘I have a very good hand;’ and it is not wise, if that is the case, to pay a large sum for the privilege of seeing how good his hand is, unless your own is so good as to give you a very good chance of having the best. Even then it is better to see and go better than to call. For by so doing you have two chances to one,—the chance that, seeing you so confident, he will not go on, and the chance that when the call is made you will be found to have the better hand. Now, a bold bluff often forces success—if the player is not given to bluffing. If he is, he is soon found out; and thereafter he bluffs at his proper peril. Probably no bluffing poker-player has ever been successful for any great length of time. Even if he is so wealthy that he can stand a few checks so far as his pocket is concerned, he begins to lose nerve when a few large bluffs have been met with a call and his pockets have suffered accordingly. But the player who nine times out of ten plays the straight game, may often win largely by an occasional bluff,—if he is ready to overlook the fact that a bluff is a lie.

How the bluff works may be seen from the two following tales told by the author of ‘Poker and How to Play It.’

The first case relates to play between two eminent American politicians (and really one cannot wonder that the name is no longer in good odour in America)—Clay and Webster. ‘It was Webster’s deal. Clay took one hand and Webster stood pat.’ In other words, Clay indicated that he had a hand which might be bettered if one card were altered, and his draw of one card only suggested a good hand; for one card may be drawn with advantage to a triplet (to give either ‘fours’ or ‘a full hand,’ or to complete a sequence or a flush; while Webster leaving his hand unchanged implied that it was a good one. ‘They went on betting until they had each 2,000 dollars on the board, when Clay called. Webster laughed, shrugged his shoulders, and threw his hand on the pot, saying, ‘I’ve only a pair of deuces.’ ‘Then the pot is yours,’ Clay said, also laughing; ‘I have only ace high.’ Each felt sure that the other was bluffing, and both were right (*Arcades ambo*).’ ‘It was good evidence,’ proceeds the narrator, ‘of what

shrewd and evenly matched players they were, but then theirs were great heads. We have none like them now.' The strange part of the story is that Clay should have called; for apart from any question whether Webster were bluffing or not, ace-high is not a hand on which to call. If Clay felt sure the other was bluffing, his best chance was to bluff boldly too. He should have taken King John's tone, 'Here have we war for war, controlment for controlment; so answer France.'

The second case takes rather longer in the telling, but is equally impressive and suggestive. Five players were engaged, all wealthy—three large cotton merchants, one an extensive manufacturer of fertilisers, one a hotel proprietor. It appears from the sequel that one was called 'the major,' but whether the major was a cotton merchant or a hotel proprietor is not made manifest. The major, whatever other business he may have had, was unlucky on this occasion, though a strong player, and had soon lost over 10,000 dollars. All this favoured his chance in bluffing; for in poker, as in other things, the man who can wait generally wins. At last the major felt his time had come (we are giving the story, scarce wittingly, quite a new complexion, for in the original nothing suggests that the earlier losses were part of the major's plot). He laughingly remarked, when it was his turn to put up, 'Gentlemen, this game is going a little slow. I'll make it 1,000 dollars to play.' Three of the others 'saw' it, and when his turn came the Major raised the blind 1,000 dollars. This was also 'seen' by the others, 'and on the draw for cards he drew one card for a flush and made a pair of deuces; the second man drew three cards, the third one card, and the fourth two cards. Each of the others bet a "chip," and the major bet 5,000 dollars. The second and third men dropped; but the fourth, remarking, "Major, you can't bluff me," raised him 5,000 dollars. Without moving a muscle of his face, the Major drew out his book, and writing a check for 25,000 dollars, threw it on the pile, saying, "If you think I'm bluffing come and see that." This was too much for the fertilizer gentleman, and he laid down three kings, while the Major scooped in the 42,000 dollars." Perhaps it may interest the reader to inquire how the sum of 42,000 dollars was made up, and to determine how much the Major won.'

It is clear that here an element comes in which is quite remote from any question of skill or judgment, otherwise than as the swindler shows judgment in selecting his victims. When poker is played as a parlour game bluffing should be omitted, as

practice in this department of the game is really practice in the art of lying with unchanging face, and this is not a desirable art, whatever rogues may think. The gain which can be made by skill in lying is more than matched by the loss which a reputation for such skill is sure to bring.

But the avoidance of bluffing takes away none of the good qualities which poker has as a game of skill. The player may still back his hand with more or less boldness, according to its quality and his temperament. He still requires to exercise judgment as to the actual or relative value of a hand; he still has to note observantly what is done by other players, what cards they draw, what their ways are in standing on a hand, in holding when advances are made by others, and so forth.

In actual play for money the use of a good limit below which the player makes it a rule to stand out is sound policy; for in the long run the player whose lowest hand for backing is a strong one, as two aces, or low threes at the least in small companies, and high threes in large companies, must come off well. He will win more than he loses. But it must be remembered that constant caution is apt to diminish the profits of successful ventures. The poker-player wants others to play high when he has a winning hand, and if it becomes known that he never backs any but strong hands, none will 'raise' very much against him. To succeed in pocketing a large share of other people's money, which is the true poker-player's object, the most cautious player must indulge in an occasional extravagance. So also with a very strong hand—one that is practically sure to win—the judicious poker-player must play a waiting game. He must reverse the tactics of the bluffer, who tries to persuade others that his hand is better than it really is; he must try to persuade the rest that his hand is but a poor one; so will they see and raise, see and raise, until there is something in the pool worth winning, when he can see and raise more boldly, and finally call or await the call with confidence. (In fact, lying in wait is the secret of success at poker.)

Let us consider briefly what are the chances for each different kind of hand at poker.

First, the total number of ways in which a set of five cards can be formed out of a pack containing 52 cards has to be determined. This is easy enough. You multiply together 52, 51, 50, 49, and 48, and divide the product by that obtained from multiplying together 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. You thus get 2,598,960 as the total number of poker-hands.

It is very easy to determine the number of flushes and sequences and flush sequences which are possible.

Thus, begin with the flush sequences. We can have in each suit, Ace, 2, 3, 4, 5; 2, 3, 4, 5, 6; 3, 4, 5, 6, 7; and so on up to 10, Knave, Queen, King, Ace; or in all there are ten flush sequences in each suit, forty flush sequences in all.

The number of sequences which are not flush may be thus determined. The arrangement of numbers may be any one of the ten just indicated. But taking any one of these, as 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, the three may be of any suit out of the four; so that each arrangement may be obtained in four different ways as respects the first card; so with the second, third, &c.; or in all 4 times 4 times 4 times 4, or 1,024, four of which only will be flushes. Thus there are 1,020 times 10, or 10,200 sequences which are not flush.

Now as respects flushes their number is very easily determined. The number of combinations of five cards which can be formed out of the 13 cards of a suit are given by multiplying together 13, 12, 11, 10, and 9, and dividing by the product of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5; this will be found to be 1287. Thus there are 4 times 1287, or 5,148 possible flushes. Of these 5,108 are not sequence flushes.

The total number of 'four' hands may be considered next. The process for finding it is very simple. There are of course only 13 fours, each of which can be taken with any one of the remaining 48 cards; so that there are 13 times 48, or 624, possible four hands.

Next to determine the number of 'full hands.' This is not difficult, but requires a little more attention. A full hand consists of a triplet and a pair. Now manifestly there are four triplets of each kind—four sets of three aces, four of three kings, and so forth (for we may take each ace from the four aces in succession, leaving in each case a different triplet of aces; and so with the other denominations). Thus, in all, 4 times 13, or 52 different triplets can be formed out of the pack of 52 cards. When one of these triplets has been formed there remain 49 cards, out of which the total number of sets of two which can be formed is obtained by multiplying 49 by 48 and dividing by two; whence we get 1,176 such combinations in all. But the total number of pairs which can be formed from among these 49 cards is much smaller. There are four twos, which (as cribbage teaches us) will give six pairs of twos; so there are six pairs of threes, six pairs

of fours, and so on ; or as there are only twelve possible kinds of pairs (after our triplet removed) there are in all 6 times 12, that is 72, possible pairs which can with the triplet form a full hand. Hence, as there are 52 possible triplets, the total number of full hands is 52 times 72, or 3,744.

The number of triplet hands which are not also fours or fulls (for every four hand contains triplets) follows at once from the above. There are 52 possible triplets, each of which can be combined with 1,176 combinations of two cards out of the remaining 49, giving in all 52 times 1,176, or 61,152 sets of five, three at least of which are alike. But there are 624 four hands, each of which is not only a triplet hand but will manifestly make four of the triplet hands our gross reckoning includes (for from every four you can make three triplets), and there are 3,744 full hands. These (to wit 4,496 fours and 5,744 fulls, or 6,240 hands in all) must be removed from our count, leaving 54,912 triplet hands (proper) in all.

This last result might have been obtained another way, which (as I shall use it for counting pair hands) I may as well indicate here. Taking any triplet of the 52 there remain 49 cards, one of which is of the same denomination as the triplet. Removing this, there are left 48 cards, out of which the number of sets of two which can be formed is obtained by multiplying 48 by 47 and dividing by 2 ; it is therefore 1,128, and among these 72 are pairs. There remain then 1,056 sets of two, any one of which can be combined with each of 52 triplets to give a triplet hand pure and simple. Thus, in all, there are 52 times 1,056 triplet hands, or 54,912, as before.

Next for double and single pairs.

From the whole pack of 52 cards we can form 6 times 13 pairs ; for 6 aces can be formed, 6 pairs of two, 6 pairs of threes, and so forth. Thus there are in all 78 different pairs. When we have taken out any pair, there remain 50 cards. From these we must remove the two cards of the same denomination, as either or both of these must not appear in the hand to be formed. There remain 48 cards, from which we can form 72 other pairs. Each of these can be taken with any one of the 46 remaining cards, except with those two which are of the same denomination, or with 44 in all, without forming a triplet. Each of these combinations can be taken with each of the 78 pairs, giving a two-pair hand, only it is obvious that each two-pair hand will be given twice by this arrangement. Thus the total

number of two-pair hands is half of 78 times 72 times 44, or there are 123,552 such hands in all.

Next, as to simple pairs. We get, as before, 78 different pairs. Each of these can be taken with any set of three formed out of the 48 cards left when the other 2 of the same denomination have been removed, except the 72 times 44 (that is 3,168) pairs indicated in dealing with the last case, and the 48 triplets which can be formed out of these same 48 cards, or 3,216 sets in all. Now the total number of sets of three cards which can be formed out of 48 is given by multiplying 48 by 47 by 46, and dividing by the product of the numbers 1, 2, and 3. It is found to be 17,296. We diminish this by 3,216, getting 14,082, and find that there are in all 78 times 14,082 or 1,098,240.

The hands which remain are those which are to be estimated by the highest card in them; and their number will of course be obtained by subtracting the sum of the numbers already obtained from the total number of possible hands. We thus obtain the number 1,302,540.

Thus of the four best classes of hands, there are the following numbers:—

Of flush sequences there may be	40
„ fours	624
„ full hands	3,744
„ common flushes	5,108
„ common sequences	10,200
„ triplets	54,912
„ two pairs	123,552
„ pairs	1,098,240
„ other hands ¹	1,302,540
<hr/>	
Total number of possible hands	2,598,960

It will be seen that those who devised the rules for poker play set the different hands in very proper order. It is fitting, for instance, that as there are only 40 possible flush sequence hands, out of a total number of 2,598,960 hands, while there are 624 'four' hands, the flush sequences should come first, and so

¹ It is easy to test the accuracy of the whole series of calculations by determining independently how many hands there are not belonging to the first eight classes. Thus, as all the cards of the five are of different denominations, we first take the combinations of the thirteen card names five together. These (as in dealing with common flushes above) are 1,287 in number. But, as in dealing with common sequences, we must multiply these by 4 times 4 times 4 times 4, or by 1,024, getting 1,317,888. Subtracting thence the flushes and sequences, 15,348 in all, we get 1,302,540 as the total number of common hands (not containing pairs or the like) as above.

with the rest. It is noteworthy, however, that when sequences were not counted, as was the rule in former times, there was one hand absolutely unique and unconquerable. The holder of four aces then wagered on a certainty, for no one else could hold that hand. At present there is no absolutely sure winning hand. The holder of ace, king, queen, knave, ten, flush, *may* (though it is of course exceedingly unlikely) be met by the holder of the same cards, flush, in another suit. Or when we remember that at whist it *has* happened that the deal divided the four suits among the four players, to each a complete suit, we see that four players at poker *might* each receive a flush sequence headed by the ace. Thus the use of sequences has saved poker-players from the possible risk of having either to stand out or wager on a certainty, which last would of course be very painful to the feelings of a professional gambler.

We might subdivide the hands above classified into a much longer array, beginning thus: 4 flush sequences headed by ace; 4 headed by king, and so on down to 4 headed by five; 48 possible four-aces hands; 48 four-kings hands; and so on down to 48 four-twos hands; 24 possible 'fulls' of 3 aces and 2 kings; as many of 3 aces and two queens; and so on down to 24 'fulls' of 3 twos and 2 threes, and so on. Anyone who cares to do this can, by drawing the line at any hand, ascertain at once the number of hands above and not above that hand in value; and thus determine the chance that any hand taken at random is above or below that particular hand in value. The comparatively simple table above only shows how many hands there are above or not above pairs, triplets, and the like. But the more complete series could be very easily formed.

We note from the above table that more than half the possible poker hands are below pairs in value. So that Clay was right enough in wagering on an ace-high hand, seeing that there are more hands which will not beat it (supposing the highest next card a king, at any rate) than there are hands that will; but he was quite wrong in calling on such a hand, even against a single opponent.

The effect of increase in the number of hands can also readily be determined. Many even among gamblers know so little of the doctrine of chances as not to be aware of, still less to be able to measure the effect of, the presence of a great number of other contestants. Yet it is easy to illustrate the matter.

Thus, suppose a player casts a die single against one other. If the first has cast four the odds are in favour of his not being

beaten; for there are only two casts which *will* beat him and four which will not. The chance that he will not be beaten by a single opponent is thus $\frac{4}{6}$ ths or $\frac{2}{3}$. If there is another opponent, the chance that he individually will not cast better than 4, is also $\frac{2}{3}$. But the chance that neither will throw better than 4 is obtained by multiplying $\frac{2}{3}$ by $\frac{2}{3}$. It is therefore $\frac{4}{9}$; or the odds are 5 to 4 in favour of one or other beating the cast of the first thrower. If there are three others, in like manner the chance that not one of the three will throw better than 4 is obtained by multiplying $\frac{2}{3}$ by $\frac{2}{3}$ by $\frac{2}{3}$. It is therefore $\frac{8}{27}$; or the odds are 19 to 8 in favour of the first thrower's cast of 4 being beaten. And so with every increase in the number of other throwers, the chance of the first thrower's cast being beaten is increased. So that if the first thrower casts 4, and is offered his share of the stakes before the next throw is made, the offer is a bad one if there is but one opponent, a good one if there are two, and a very good one if there are more than two.

In like manner, the same hand which it would be safe to stand on (as a rule) at poker against two or three opponents, may be a very unsafe hand to stand on against five or six.

Then the player has to consider the pretty chance-problems involved in drawing.

Suppose, for instance, your original hand contains a pair—the other three cards being all unlike: should you stand out? or should you draw? (to purchase right to which you must stand in); or should you stand in without drawing? Again, if you draw, how many of the three loose cards should you throw out? and what are your chances of improving your hand?

Here you have to consider first whether you will stand in, which depends not on the value of your pair only, but also on the chance that your hand will be improved by drawing. Having decided to stand in, remember that discarding three tells the rest of the company that in all possibility you are drawing to improve a pair hand; and at poker, telling anything helps the enemy. If one of your loose cards is an ace, you do well to discard only the other two; for this looks like drawing to a triplet, and you may chance to draw a pair to your ace. But usually you have so much better a chance of improving your hand by drawing three that it is, as a rule, better to do this.

Drawing to a triplet is usually good policy. 'Your mathematical expectation of improvement is slight,' says 'The Complete Poker

Player,' 'being 1 to 23 of a fourth card' (it should be *the* fourth card) 'of the same denomination, and 2 to 23 of another pair of denomination different from the triplet,' a remark suggesting the comment that to obtain a pair of the same denomination as the triplet would require play something like what we hear of in old Mississippi stories, where a 'straight flush' would be met by a very full pair of hands, to wit, five in one hand and a revolver in the other! The total expectation of improvement is 1 to 8; but then see what an impression you make by a draw which means a good hand. Then, too, you may suggest a yet better hand, without much impairing your chance of improvement, by drawing one card only. This gives you one chance in 47 of making fours, and 1 in 16 of picking up one of the three cards of the same denomination as the odd cards you retain. This is a chance of 1 in 12.

'Draws to straights and flushes are usually dearly purchased,' says our oracle; 'always so at a small table. Their value increases directly as the number of players.' (The word 'directly' is here incorrectly used, the value increases as the number of players, but not *directly* as the number.) Of course in drawing to a two-ended straight, that is one which does not begin or end with an ace, the chance of success is represented by 8 in 47, for there are 47 cards outside your original hand of which only eight are good to complete the straight. For a one-end straight the chance is but 4 in 47. With a small chance, too, of improving your hand, you are trying for a hand better than you want in any but a large company. 'If you play in a large party,' says 'The Complete Poker Player,' 'say seven or eight, and find occasion to draw for a straight against six players, do so by all means, even if you split aces.' The advice is sound. Under the circumstances you need a better hand than ace-pair to give you your fair sixth share of the chances.

As to flushes your chances are better, when you have already five of a suit. You discard one, and out of the remaining 47 cards any one of nine will make your flush for you. Your chance then is 1 in $5\frac{2}{3}$. In dealing with this point our oracle goes altogether wrong, and adopts a principle so inconsistent with the doctrine of probabilities as to show that, though he knows much more than Steinmetz, he still labours under somewhat similar illusions. 'Theoretically,' says he, 'the result just obtained is absolutely true; but I have experimented with six hands through a succession of 500 deals, and filled only 83 flushes in the

500, equal to one in six, and one twentieth draws. Of course I am not prepared to say that this would be the average in many thousand deals; theoretically it is an untrue result; but I here suggest a *possible* explanation of what I confess is to me a mystery.' Then he expounds the very matter on which we touched above. 'In casting dice,' he says, '*theoretically*, any given throw has no influence upon the next throw, and is not influenced by the previous throw. Yet if you throw a die and it turns up six, while the chances are *theoretically* one to six' (one in six it should be) 'that the next throw will produce a six because the previous throw of six lies absolutely in the past, yet you may safely bet something more than the usual odds against it. Then suppose the second throw turns up a six, that throw also now lies in the past, and cannot be proved to have an influence upon throw number three, which you are preparing to make. If any *material* influence is suspected you may change the box and die; and you may now bet twice the usual odds against the six. Why? Because you know by experience that it is extremely difficult to throw six three times in succession, even if you do not know the precise odds against it. Granted, certain odds against throwing six twice in succession, &c., yet at any given moment when the player shakes the box in which is a six-faced die, he has one chance in six of throwing a six; and yet if he has just thrown sixes twice, you may bet twelve to one that he will not throw a six in that particular cast.' If I did not hold gambling to be near akin to swindling, and could find but a few hundred who held this doctrine, how much money might I not gain by accepting any number of wagers of this wise sort!

The fact is, the mistake here, is just the ridiculous mistake which Steinmetz called 'the maturity of the chances' over again. It is a mistake which has misled to their ruin many thousands of gamblers, who might have escaped the evil influence of that other equally foolish mistake about being lucky or unlucky, in the vein or out of it. Steinmetz puts the matter thus: 'In a game of chance, the oftener the same combination has occurred in succession, the nearer are we to the certainty that it will not recur at the next cast or turn up: this is the most elementary of the theories on probabilities; it is termed the maturity of the chances.' The real fact being that this is not a theory of probabilities at all, but disproved by the theory of probabilities, and disproved whenever it has been put to the test, by facts.

Take the case considered in 'The Complete Poker Player,'

and note the evidence on the strength of which the author of that work rejects the theory in favour of a practical common sense notion (as he thinks), which is, in reality, nonsense. You may expect 9 successful draws to a flush in 47 hands; therefore in the 500 deals he experimented upon, he might have expected 95 or 96; and he only obtained 83. Now 500 trials are far too few to test such a matter as this. You can hardly test even the tossing of a coin properly by fewer than a thousand trials; and in that case there are but 2 possible events. Here there are 47, of which 9 are favourable. It is the failure to recognise this which led the Astronomer Royal for Scotland to recognise something mystical and significant in the preponderance of 3's and the deficiency of 7's among the digits representing the proportion of the circumference to the diameter of a circle. In casting a coin a great number of times, we do not find that the occurrence of a great number of successive heads or tails in any way affects the average proportion of heads or tails coming next after the series. Thus I have before me the record of a series of 16,317 tossings, in which the number of sequences of tails (only) were rendered; and I find that after 271 cases, in which tails had been tossed 5 times in succession, the next tossing gave in 132 cases heads, and in 139 cases tails. Among the 16,317 tossings, two cases occurred in which tail was tossed 15 times in succession, which, as it happens, is *more* than theory would regard as probable.

Here, however, I must draw these notes to a close. I have been already led on farther than I had intended to go. I shall note only one other of the doctrines (mostly sound enough theoretically) laid down in the 'Complete Poker Player.' Players sometimes, he says, act on the strange principle that if they are in bad luck, it is well to try the bold experiments usually regarded as bad play—as two negatives in algebra make a positive, so they think that bad play and bad luck united will win. On this our author makes the significant comment, 'a slight degree of intoxication aids to perfect this intellectual deduction.' Poker-playing generally, as a process for making money more quickly, is much improved and enlivened by a slight degree of intoxication.

RICHARD A. PROCTOR.

A Bookman's Purgatory.

THOMAS BLINTON was a book-hunter. He had always been a book-hunter, ever since, at an extremely early age, he had awakened to the errors of his ways as a collector of stamps and monograms. In book-hunting he saw no harm; nay, he would contrast its joys, in a rather pharisaical style, with the pleasures of shooting and fishing. He constantly declined to believe that the devil came for that renowned amateur of black letter, G. Steevens. Dibdin himself, who tells the story (with obvious anxiety and alarm), pretends to refuse credit to the ghastly narrative. 'His language,' says Dibdin, in his account of the book-hunter's end, 'was, too frequently, the language of imprecation.' This is rather good, as if Dibdin thought a gentleman might swear pretty often, but not *'too frequently.'* 'Although I am not disposed to admit,' Dibdin goes on, 'the *whole* of the testimony of the good woman who watched by Steevens's bedside, although my prejudices (as they may be called) will not allow me to believe that the windows shook, and that strange noises and deep groans were heard at midnight in his room, yet no creature of common sense (and this woman possessed the quality in an eminent degree) could mistake oaths for prayers; and so forth. In short, Dibdin clearly holds that the windows did shake 'without a blast,' like the banners in Bransholme Hall when somebody came for the Goblin Page. But Blinton would hear of none of these things. He said that his taste made him take exercise, that he walked from the City to West Kensington every day, to beat the covers of the bookstalls, while other men travelled in the expensive cab or the unwholesome Metropolitan Railway. We are all apt to hold favourable views of our own amusements, and, for my own part, I believe that trout and salmon are incapable of feeling pain. But the flimsiness of Blinton's theories must be apparent to every unbiassed moralist. His 'harmless taste' really involved most of the deadly sins, or at all events a fair working majority of them. He coveted his neighbours' books. When he got the chance he bought books in a cheap market and sold them in a dear market,

thereby degrading literature to the level of trade. He took advantage of the ignorance of uneducated persons who kept book-stalls. He was envious, and grudged the good fortune of others, while he rejoiced in their failures. He turned a deaf ear to the appeals of poverty. He was luxurious, and laid out more money than he should have done on his selfish pleasures, often adorning a volume with a morocco binding when Mrs. Blinton sighed in vain for some old *point d'Alençon* lace. Greedy, proud, envious, stingy, extravagant, and sharp in his dealings, Blinton was guilty of most of the sins which the Church recognises as 'deadly.'

On the very day before that of which the affecting history is now to be told, Blinton had been running the usual round of crime. He had (as far as intentions went) defrauded a bookseller in Holywell Street by purchasing from him, for the sum of two shillings, what he took to be a very rare Elzevir. It is true that when he got home and consulted 'Willems,' he found that he had got hold of the wrong copy, in which the figures denoting the numbers of pages are printed right, and which is therefore worth exactly 'nuppence' to the collector. But the intention is the thing, and Blinton's intention was distinctly fraudulent. When he discovered his error, then 'his language,' as Dibdin says, 'was that of imprecation.' Worse (if possible) than this, Blinton had gone to a sale, begun to bid for 'Les Essais de Michel, Seigneur de Montaigne' (Foppens, MDCLIX.), and, carried away by excitement, had 'plunged' to the extent of 15*l.*, which was precisely the amount of money he owed his plumber and gas-fitter, a worthy man with a large family. Then, meeting a friend (if the book-hunter has friends), or rather an accomplice in lawless enterprise, Blinton had remarked the glee on the other's face. The poor man had purchased a little old Olaus Magnus, with woodcuts, representing were-wolves, fire-drakes, and other fearful wild-fowl, and was happy in his bargain. But Blinton, with fiendish joy, pointed out to him that the index was imperfect, and left him sorrowing. Deeds more foul have yet to be told. Blinton had discovered a new sin, so to speak, in the collecting way. Aristophanes says of one of his favourite blackguards, 'Not only is he a villain, but he has invented an original villainy.' Blinton was like this. He maintained that every man who came to notoriety had, at some period, published a volume of poems which he had afterwards repented of and withdrawn. It was Blinton's hideous pleasure to collect stray copies of these unhappy volumes, these '*Péchés de*

Jeunesse,' which, always and invariably, bear a gushing inscription from the author to a friend. He had all Lord John Manners's poems, and even Mr. Ruskin's. He had the 'Ode to Despair' of Smith (now a comic writer), and the 'Love Lyrics' of Brown, who is now a permanent under-secretary, than which nothing can be less gay nor more permanent. He had the revolutionary songs which a dignitary of the Church published and withdrew from circulation. Blinton was wont to say he expected to come across 'Triolets of a Tribune,' by Mr. John Bright, and 'Original Hymns for Infant Minds,' by Mr. Henry Labouchere, if he only hunted long enough. On the day of which I speak he had secured a volume of love-poems which the author had done his best to destroy, and he had gone on to his club and read all the funniest passages aloud to friends of the author, who was on the club committee. Ah, was this a kind action? In short, Blinton had filled up the cup of his iniquities, and nobody will be surprised to hear that he met the appropriate punishment of his offence. Blinton had passed, on the whole, a happy day, notwithstanding the error about the Elzevir. He dined well at his club, went home, slept well, and started next morning for his office in the City, walking, as usual, and intending to pursue the pleasures of the chase at all the bookstalls. At the very first, in the Brompton Road, he saw a man turning over the rubbish in the cheap box. Blinton stared at him, fancied he knew him, thought he didn't, and then became a prey to the glittering eye of the other. The Stranger, who wore the conventional cloak and slouched soft hat of Strangers, was apparently an accomplished mesmerist, or thought-reader, or adept, or esoteric Buddhist. He resembled Mr. Isaacs, Zanoni (in the novel of that name), Mendoza (in 'Codlingsby'), the soul-less man in 'A Strange Story,' Mr. Home, Mr. Irving Bishop, a Buddhist adept in the astral body, and most other mysterious characters of history and fiction. Before his Awful Will, Blinton's mere modern obstinacy shrank back like a child abashed. The Stranger glided to him and whispered, 'Buy these.' 'These' were a complete set of Auerbach's novels, in English, which, I need not say, Blinton would never have dreamt of purchasing had he been left to his own devices.

'Buy these!' repeated the Adept, or whatever he was, in a cruel whisper. Paying the sum demanded, and trailing his vast load of German romance, poor Blinton followed the fiend.

They reached a stall where, amongst much trash, Glatigny's 'Jour de l'An d'un Vagabond' was exposed.

'Look,' said Blinton, 'there is a book I have wanted some time. Glatignys are getting rather scarce, and it is an amusing trifle.'

'Nay, buy *that*,' said the implacable Stranger, pointing with a hooked forefinger at Alison's 'History of Europe' in an indefinite number of volumes. Blinton shuddered.

'What, buy *that*, and why? In heaven's name what could I do with it?'

'Buy it,' repeated the persecutor, 'and *that* (indicating the "Ilios" of Dr. Schliemann—a bulky work), and *these* (pointing to all Mr. Theodore Alois Buckley's translations of the Classics), and *these*' (glancing at the collected writings of the late Mr. Hain Friswell, and at a 'Life,' in more than one volume, of Mr. Gladstone).

The miserable Blinton paid, and trudged along, carrying the bargains under his arm. Now one book fell out, now another dropped by the way. Sometimes a portion of Alison came ponderously to earth; sometimes the 'Gentle Life' sunk resignedly to the ground. The Adept kept picking them up again, and packing them under the arms of the weary Blinton.

The victim now attempted to put on an air of geniality, and tried to enter into conversation with his tormentor.

'He *does* know about books,' thought Blinton, 'and he must have a weak spot somewhere.'

So the wretched amateur made play in his best conversational style. He talked of bindings, of Maioli, of Grolier, of De Thou, of Derome, of Clovis Eve, of Roger Payne, of Trautz, and eke of Bauzonnet. He discoursed of first editions, of black letter, and even of illustrations and vignettes. He approached the topic of Bibles, but here his tyrant, with a fierce yet timid glance, interrupted him.

'Buy those!' he hissed through his teeth.

'Those' were the complete publications of the Folk Lore Society.

Blinton did not care for folk lore (very bad men never do), but he had to act as he was told.

Then, without pause or remorse, he was charged to acquire the 'Ethics' of Aristotle, in the agreeable versions of Williams and Chace. Next he secured 'Strathmore,' 'Chandos,' 'Under Two Flags,' and 'Two Little Wooden Shoes,' and several dozens more of Ouida's novels. The next stall was entirely filled with school-books, old geographies, Livys, Delectuses, Arnold's 'Greek Exercises,' Ollendorff's, and what not.

'Buy them all,' hissed the fiend. He seized whole boxes and piled them on Blinton's head.

He tied up Ouida's novels, in two parcels, with string, and fastened each to one of the buttons above the tails of Blinton's coat.

'You are tired?' asked the tormentor. 'Never mind, these books will soon be off your hands.'

So speaking, the Stranger, with amazing speed, hurried Blinton back through Holywell Street, along the Strand, and up to Piccadilly, stopping at last at the door of Blinton's famous and very expensive binder.

The binder opened his eyes, as well he might, at the vision of Blinton's treasures. Then the miserable Blinton found himself, as it were automatically and without any exercise of his will, speaking thus:—

'Here are some things I have picked up—extremely rare—and you will oblige me by binding them in your best manner, regardless of expense. Morocco, of course; crushed levant morocco, *doublé*, every book of them, *petits fers*, my crest and coat of arms, plenty of gilding. Spare no cost. Don't keep me waiting, as you generally do;' for indeed bookbinders are the most dilatory of the human species.

Before the astonished binder could ask the most necessary questions, Blinton's tormentor had hurried that amateur out of the room.

'Come on to the sale,' he cried.

'What sale?' said Blinton.

'Why, the Beckford sale; it is the thirteenth day, a lucky day.'

'But I have forgotten my catalogue.'

'Where is it?'

'In the third shelf from the top, on the right-hand side of the ebony book-case at home.'

The Stranger stretched out his arm, which swiftly elongated itself till the hand disappeared from view round the corner. In a moment the hand returned with the catalogue. The pair sped on to Messrs. Sotheby's auction-rooms in Wellington Street. Every one knows the appearance of a great book-sale. The long table surrounded by eager bidders, resembles from a little distance a roulette table, and communicates the same sort of excitement. The amateur is at a loss to know how to conduct himself. If he bids in his own person some bookseller will outbid him, partly

because the bookseller knows, after all, he knows little about books, and suspects that the amateur may, in this case, know more. Besides, professionals always dislike amateurs, and, in this game, they have a very great advantage. Blinton knew all this, and was in the habit of giving his commissions to a broker. But now he felt (and very naturally) as if a demon had entered into him. 'Tirante il Bianco Valorissimo Cavaliere' was being competed for, an excessively rare romance of chivalry, in magnificent red Venetian morocco, from Canevari's library. The book is one of the rarest of the Aldine Press, and beautifully adorned with Canevari's device—a simple and elegant affair in gold and colours. 'Apollo is driving his chariot across the green waves towards the rock, on which winged Pegasus is pawing the ground,' though why this action of a horse should be called 'pawing' (the animal notoriously not possessing paws) it is hard to say. Round this graceful design is the inscription $\text{ΟΡΘΩΣ ΚΑΙ ΜΗΛΟΞΙΩΣ}$, whatever the last word may mean, a thing hidden from Liddell and Scott. In his ordinary mood Blinton could only have admired 'Tirante il Bianco' from a distance. But now, the demon inspiring him, he rushed into the lists, and challenged the great Mr. —, the Napoleon of bookselling. The price had already reached five hundred pounds.

'Six hundred,' cried Blinton.

'Guineas,' said the great Mr. —.

'Seven hundred,' screamed Blinton.

'Guineas,' replied the other.

This arithmetical dialogue went on till even Mr. — struck his flag, with a sigh, when the maddened Blinton had said 'Four thousand.' The cheers of the audience rewarded the largest bid ever made for any book. As if he had not done enough, the Stranger now impelled Blinton to contend with Mr. — for every expensive work that appeared. The audience naturally fancied that Blinton was in the earlier stage of softening of the brain, when a man conceives himself to have inherited boundless wealth, and is determined to live up to it. The hammer fell for the last time. Blinton owed some fifty thousand pounds, and exclaimed audibly, as the influence of the fiend died out, 'I am a ruined man.'

'Then your books must be sold,' cried the Stranger, and, leaping on a chair, he addressed the audience:—

'Gentlemen, I invite you to Mr. Blinton's sale, which will immediately take place. The collection contains some very remarkable early English poets, many first editions of the French

classics, most of the rarer Aldines, and a singular assortment of Americana.'

In a moment, as if by magic, the shelves round the room were filled with Blinton's books, all tied up in big lots of some thirty volumes each. His early Molières were fastened to old French dictionaries and school-books. His Shakspeare quartos were in the same lot with tattered railway novels. His copy (happily almost unique) of Richard Barnfield's 'Affectionate Shepherd' was coupled with two odd volumes of 'Chips from a German Workshop' and a cheap, imperfect example of 'Tom Brown's Schooldays.' Hookes's 'Amanda' was at the bottom of a lot of American devotional works, where it kept company with an Elzevir Tacitus, and the Aldine 'Hypnerotomachia.' The auctioneer put up lot after lot, and Blinton plainly saw that the whole affair was a 'knock-out.' His most treasured spoils were parted with at the price of waste paper. It is an awful thing to be present at one's own sale. No man would bid above a few shillings. Well did Blinton know that after the knock-out the plunder would be shared among the grinning bidders. At last his 'Adonais,' uncut, bound by Lortic, went, in company with some old 'Bradshaws,' the 'Court Guide' of 1881, and an odd volume of the 'Sunday at Home,' for sixpence. The Stranger smiled a smile of peculiar malignity. Blinton leaped up to protest; the room seemed to shake around him, but words would not come to his lips.

Then he heard a familiar voice observe, as a familiar grasp shook his shoulder,

'Tom, Tom, what a nightmare you are enjoying!'

He was in his own arm-chair, where he had fallen asleep after dinner, and Mrs. Blinton was doing her best to arouse him from his awful vision. Beside him lay 'L'Enfer du Bibliophile, vu et décrit par Charles Asselineau.' (Paris: Tardieu, MDCCCLX.)

* * * * *

If this were an ordinary tract, I should have to tell how Blinton's eyes were opened, how he gave up book-collecting, and took to gardening, or politics, or something of that sort. But truth compels me to admit that Blinton's repentance had vanished by the end of the week, when he was discovered marking M. Claudin's Catalogue, surreptitiously, before breakfast. Thus, indeed, end all our remorse. 'Lancelot falls to his own love again,' as in the romance. Much, and justly, as theologians decry a death-bed repentance, it is, perhaps, the only repentance that we do not repent of. All others leave us ready, when occasion comes, to fall

to our old love again; and may that love never be worse than the taste for old books! Once a collector, always a collector. *Moi qui parle*, I have sinned, and struggled, and fallen. I have thrown catalogues, unopened, into the waste-paper basket. I have withheld my feet from the paths that lead to Sotheby's and Puttick's. I have crossed the street to avoid a bookstall. In fact, like the prophet Nicholas, 'I have been known to be steady for weeks at a time.' And then the fatal moment of temptation has arrived, and I have succumbed to the soft seductions of an Aldine or an Elzevir, or an old book on Angling. Probably Grolier was thinking of such weaknesses when he chose his devices *Tanquam Ventus*, and *quisque suos patimur Manes*. Like the wind we are blown about, and, like the people in the *Æneid*, we are obliged to suffer the consequences of our own extravagance.

A. LANG.

The Age of Trees.

SINCE De Candolle, the celebrated Swiss botanist, propagated the idea that a tree has no limits set by nature in its constitution to the term of its existence, the question of the age attainable by trees has never ceased to be debated with considerable interest. De Candolle's argument was to the effect that whereas animals have, by the physiological construction of their vessels, a set limit to the duration of their lives, trees have no such natural termination; and that, although their decay and death is so familiar to us that we commonly speak of this or that species as living for a given period like two hundred years, yet such decay is rather the result of accident or disease than of any law inherent in their nature such as in our own case we designate as death by old age. Whence, the same botanist inferred, there is no reason why trees under perfectly favourable conditions should ever perish; and he proceeded to adduce in favour of that theory instances of trees which even then were in the enjoyment of no contemptible moment of eternity.

Until accurate observations have been made for hundreds or perhaps thousands of years, it would seem impossible to arrive at even an approximate solution of so wide a problem as this. Under the best conditions we could never eliminate those causes of tree mortality which De Candolle fairly enough calls accidental, but which are contained in the invariable laws of the elements. The largest, and therefore probably the oldest, trees are the special sport of the lightning; and the storm which has so often felled trees of the most prodigious size will, even if it spare the trunk, break off boughs, thus admitting at the point of fracture that carries into the trunk which will ultimately reduce it to a mere shell, similar to one of those bull oaks wherein the bull loves to hide himself. These causes of disease and decay can never be absent, since they evidently belong to the permanent order of nature.

Again, De Candolle accounts with great probability for the diminished rate of tree growth after a certain period by such considerations as the greater distance of the roots from the air,

their coming into contact with the roots of other trees, or with a rocky or otherwise unsuitable substratum, or the diminished elasticity of the bark; and though it is possible that trees might continue to grow in their fifth century at the same rate as in their first, if the conditions remained equally favourable, yet, since the proviso can never be ensured, a further difficulty, amounting to insuperability, occurs, to prevent such an hypothesis from being brought to the test of either observation or experiment.

Whether, therefore, a tree might possibly continue living and growing for ever is a question of less entertainment than the question of its possible duration in the common state of nature and under the irreversible conditions of climate, soil, and the elements. What age may we ascribe to some of our largest specimens, either still existing or recorded in trustworthy history? Is the period of one thousand years, the favourite figure of tradition, a common or probable period of arboreal longevity, or have our proudest forest giants attained their present size in half the time that is commonly claimed for them?

In the discussion of this question we have but few known data to guide us, since statistics of the rate of growth, as afforded by careful measurement, date only from about the beginning of the eighteenth century. Of such statistics we may dismiss at once measurement of height or of the spread of a tree's boughs, the measurement of girth being far easier and more conclusive. But it is unfortunate that no standard of distance from the ground has yet been adopted for measurement, so that the needless perplexity might be avoided which is derived from giving the circumference now at the ground and now at two, or three, or six feet above it.

The counting of the rings added by exogenous trees every year to their circumferences can only, without risk of great error, be applied to trees cut down in their prime, and hence is useless for the older trees which are hollow and decayed. Trees, moreover, often develop themselves so unequally from their centre that, as in the case of a specimen in the museum at Kew, there may be about 250 rings on one side to 50 on the other. Perhaps the largest number of rings that has ever been counted was in the case of an oak felled in 1812, where they amounted to 710; but De Candolle, who mentions this, adds that three hundred years were added to this number as probably covering the remaining rings which it was no longer possible to count. This

instance may be taken to illustrate how unsatisfactory this mode of reckoning really is for all but trees of comparatively youthful age.

The external girth measurement is for these reasons the best we can have, being especially applicable where the date of a tree's introduction into a country or of its planting is definitely fixed, since it enables us to argue from the individual specimen or from a number of specimens, not with certainty, but within certain limits of variability, to the rate of growth of that tree as a species. In these measurements of trees of a century or more in age, such as are given abundantly in Loudon's '*Arboretum*,' lies our best guide, though even then the growth in subsequent ages must remain matter of conjecture. The difficulty is to reduce this conjectural quantity to the limits of probability; for given the ascertained growth of the first century, how shall we estimate the diminished growth of later centuries? The best way would seem to be to take the ascertained growth of the first century, and then to make, say, the third of it the average growth of every century. Thus if we were to take 12 feet as the ascertained growth of an oak in its first century, 4 feet would be its constant average rate, and we might conjecture that an oak of 40 feet was about 1,000 years old. But clearly it might be much less; for the reason for taking the third is not so much that it is a more probable average than the half, as that it is obviously less likely to err on the side of excess of rapidity.

The cypress affords an instance where the approximate certainty of its introduction into England enables us to form some conclusions with regard to its attainable age. The fact of its being first mentioned in Turner's '*Names of Herbs*,' published in 1548, makes it probable that it was not introduced into England before the beginning of that century. But, at all events, the cypress at Fulham which in 1793 was 2 feet 5 inches at 3 feet from the ground cannot have been planted there before 1674, the year that Compton, the great introducer of foreign trees into England in the seventeenth century, became Bishop of London. That gives a growth of about 2 feet in the first century; but sometimes it attains a higher rate, as in the case of the cypress planted by Michel Angelo at Chartreux, which was 13 feet round in 1817, giving the average rate of over 4 feet in the first three centuries. Now the cypress at Somma, between Lake Maggiore and Milan, for whose sake Napoleon bent the road out of the straight line, is not more than 23 feet in girth, so that

the tradition which makes its planting coeval with Christianity would seem doubtful; though if we take 3 feet as the first century's growth, and take the third as the average, it may evidently have been standing in the time of Caesar, as an old chronicle of Milan is averred to attest.

The Lebanon cedar first planted at Lambeth in 1683 was only 7 feet 9 inches (girth measurements alone need be given) 110 years later. Dr. Uvedale's cedar, planted at Enfield not earlier than 1670, was 15 feet eight inches when measured in 1835, i.e. 165 years afterwards. And the large cedar at Uxbridge, which was blown down in 1790, was 118 years old when Gilpin measured it in 1776, and found it to be 15 feet and a half. We should therefore be justified in assuming 12 feet as the possible first century's growth of a cedar even in England; whence we may test the probability of the oldest cedars now on Mount Lebanon having been growing there in the days of King Solomon. In the year 1696 the traveller Maundrell measured one of the largest of them and found it to be 12 yards 6 inches. Four feet a century being the average rate, the cedar measured by Maundrell would have required only nine centuries to have attained its dimensions of 36 feet; so that it need have been no older than the time of Charlemagne, and, allowing for a more rapid growth on a site where it is indigenous, may probably have been considerably younger.

From the claims to antiquity of the cedars of Lebanon let us pass to those of the Tortworth Spanish chestnut in Gloucestershire, which sometimes boasts to be the oldest tree in England, and bears an inscription to the effect that King John held a Parliament beneath it.¹ Sir Robert Atkyns, whose history of that county was published in 1712, usually bears the responsibility of connecting the tree with King John; but he only speaks of it as said by tradition 'to have been growing there in the reign of King John. It is 19 yards in compass, and seems to be several trees incorporated together, and young ones are still growing up which may in time be joined to the old body.' It was also probably on hearsay evidence that Evelyn spoke of it as standing on record that a chestnut (at Tamworth) formed a boundary tree in the reign of Stephen. We may assume Evelyn to have meant the tree in question; we may pass the hesitation of tradition between two kings not remote from one another in time; and we may accept 57 feet as the maximum measurement,

¹ Jesse, *Gleanings in Natural History*, i. 341.

though no subsequent measurement gives so high dimensions. Now, that a chestnut may attain 17 feet in its first century is proved by the fact that a chestnut at Nettlecombe, planted within the recollection, and therefore within the life, of Sir John Trevelyan, who died in 1828, was over 17 feet.¹ But we may be content with 15 feet for the first century. Then, on the principle of the third as the average, we should require a period of eleven centuries for 57 feet; but that this average would be too low is evident from the fact that in seventy-one years—i.e. between 1766 and 1837—it was proved to have increased 2 feet in girth. Therefore we should have a diminishing series between, say, 15 feet a century at one end and a little over 2 feet a century at the other. This might be at the following rate, taking each figure for the growth of a century: $15 + 13 + 10 + 8 + 6 + 3 + 2 = 57$. By which calculation seven centuries would have been the tree's age when Sir Robert Atkyns declared it to be 57 feet in 1712, an antiquity that would amply satisfy tradition, but could not remove the probability that the tree is not a single trunk, but really a number of different trees that have become incorporated together.

A somewhat similar theory may be applied to the famous *Castagna di Cento Cavalli* on Mount Etna, so called because a Queen of Aragon and 100 followers on horseback are said to have taken shelter beneath it from a shower of rain. Brydone, in 1790, measured the circumference to be 204 feet, but it seemed to him that the tree in question, of which only separate trunks remain, was really five separate trees; and though he professed to have found no bark on the insides of the stumps nor on the sides opposite to one another, yet a more recent traveller states, in Murray's guide book, that this is only true of the southernmost stem, and that one of the masses still standing does show bark all round it, which would of course prove it to be a separate tree. Of the other large chestnuts on Etna the *Castagna del Nave* is rather larger than the Tortworth specimen, whilst the *Castagna della Galea* is 76 feet at 2 feet from the ground. The rich soil of pulverised volcanic ash combined with decomposed vegetable matter probably enabled them to attain their present size within a shorter period than would be implied by such dimensions elsewhere; but whether they are five centuries or ten it is absolutely impossible to conjecture.

The great variability in the rate of growth in trees of the

¹ Selby, *Forest Trees*, 334 (1842).

same species is perhaps the most remarkable thing afforded by statistics. We say, for instance, roughly, that the beech grows twice as fast as an oak; but take four beeches mentioned by Loudon, placing their years in one column and their circumference in another :

One in King's County	at 60 years	was 17 feet.
One at Foster Hall	" 100	" " 12 "
One at Courtachy Castle	" 102	" " 18 "
One in Callendar Park	" 200	" " 17 "

So that of three beeches nearly the same in size one was only 60, another 102, and another as much as 200. And this variability of rate is still more conspicuous in the oak. De Candolle, who counted the rings of several oaks that had been felled, found one that at 200 years had only the same circumference that another had attained at 50. Some had grown slowly at first, and then rapidly; others, like bad racers, had begun fast and ended slowly. And even the diminished rate of growth would not seem to be an invariable rule, for one oak of 333 years was shown to have increased as much between 320 and 330 as it had between 90 and 100.

This reduces the computation of the age of an oak to little more than guess-work. The Cowthorpe oak, the largest existing in England, reached at one time 78 feet in circumference. Damory's oak, in Dorsetshire, was only 10 feet less when it was so decayed that it was cut up and sold for firewood in 1755; and the Boddington oak, in the vale of Gloucester, was 54 feet at the base when it was burnt down in 1790. It is needless to mention other English oaks which are also claimants to a remote antiquity; but it is obvious, from the very variable rate of the growth of oaks, that size establishes no indisputable title, and that the Cowthorpe oak need not therefore be the oldest English oak because it is the largest recorded. From Loudon's statistics of oaks are extracted the following notices of trees, according to their age and girth:—

Years.	Feet of circumference.	Years.	Feet of circumference.
40	8	200	7½
83	12	200	25
100	12	201	21
100	18	220	20
100	21	250	19½
120	14	300	33
180	15	330	27

This table not only shows the great variability of growth, but

if we take the three specimens of 100 years old, gives us the high average of 17 feet as that of only the first century. Taking, then, as usual, the third as the average growth, we should require rather more than eight centuries for an oak of 50 feet, which reduces to a very small number the oaks in England that can claim a thousand years.

When, therefore, Gilpin, in his 'Forest Scenery,' speaks of 900 years as no great age for an oak, it must be said that very few oaks can be named which by measurement would sustain their title to that age. Tradition, which is always sentimental, leans naturally to the side of exaggerated longevity. William of Wainfleet gave directions for Magdalen College, Oxford, to be built near the great oak which fell suddenly in the year 1788, and out of which the President's chair was made, in memory of the tree. Gilpin assumes that for the tree to have been called great it must have been 500 years old, and, therefore, perhaps standing in the time of King Alfred. But it is clear that it need not have been a century old to have fairly earned the title of great, and that, therefore, a period of six centuries may have covered its whole term of existence.

We are certainly apt to underrate the possible rate of growth where a tree meets with altogether favourable conditions. The silver fir was only introduced into England in the seventeenth century by Serjeant Newdigate; and one tree of his planting was thirteen feet round when Evelyn measured it eighty-one years afterwards. A comparison of the statistics of growth, as above collected with reference to the oak, indicates with respect to most trees a more rapid rate than is commonly supposed. Let us test the claims of some of the oldest limes. The Swiss used often to commemorate a victory by planting a lime tree, so that it may be true that the lime still in the square of Fribourg was planted on the day of their victory over Charles the Bold at Morat in 1476. A youth, they say, bore it as a twig into the town, and arriving breathless and exhausted from the battle had only strength to utter the word 'Victory!' before he fell down dead. But this tree was only 13 feet 9 inches in 1831, i.e. 355 years afterwards, and it would be extraordinary if a lime had not attained in that period greater bulk than even an oak might have reached in a century. The large lime at Neustadt, in Würtemberg, mentioned by Evelyn as having its boughs supported by columns of stone, was 27 feet when he wrote (1664), and in 1837 it was 54, so that within a period of 173 years it had gained as much as 27 feet. Consequently,

making allowance for diminished growth, we may fairly assume that 200 years would have been more than enough for the attainment of the circumference of the first 27 feet which it had reached in the time of Evelyn. No English lime appears to have reached such dimensions as would imply a growth of more than three centuries, though the lime at Depeham, near Norwich, which was 46 feet when Sir Thomas Browne sent his account of it to Evelyn, sufficiently dispels the legend that all limes in this country have come from two plants brought over by Sir John Spelman, who introduced the manufacture of paper into England from Germany, and to whom Queen Elizabeth granted the manor of Portbridge.

It would be natural to expect the greatest longevity in indigenous trees, and though it has been much disputed what kinds are native to the English soil, etymology alone would indicate that the following trees were of Roman importation: the elm (*ulmus*), the plane (*platanus*), the poplar (*populus*), the box (*buxus*), the chestnut (*castanea*). The yew, on the contrary, is probably indigenous, though its opponents find some reason for their scepticism in the fact that its larger specimens are chiefly found in churchyards and artificial plantations. In favour of its claim is the fact that its pretensions to longevity seem to be better founded than those of any other English tree, not even excluding the oak. A yew that was dug up from a bog in Queen's County was proved by its rings to have been 545 years of age; yet for the last 300 years of its life it had grown so slowly that near the circumference 100 rings were traceable within an inch. Some great and sudden change for the worse in the external conditions may have accounted for so slow a rate; but it would hardly be safe, with such evidence before us, to allow more than three feet a century as the normal growth of a yew, in which case the Fortingal yew in Scotland, 56 feet round in 1769, may have lived more than 18 centuries; and a longevity in proportion must be accorded to the yews at Fountain's Abbey, or to the Tisbury yew in Dorsetshire, which boasts of 37 feet in circumference. Hence tradition in this case would seem to contain nothing incredible when it asserts that the yews on Kingley Bottom, near Chichester, were on their present site when the sea-kings from the North landed on the coast of Sussex.

It is, however, but seldom that any real aid can be derived from tradition in estimating the longevity of trees. We have even to be on our guard against it, especially when it associates the general claim to antiquity by a specific name or event. In

the classical period the tendency was as strong as it is still; and we should look to our own legends when tempted to smile at the Delian palm mentioned by Pliny as coeval with Apollo, or at the two oaks at Heraclea as planted by Hercules himself. Pausanias, travelling in Greece in the second century of our era, saw a plane tree which was said to have been planted by Menelaus when collecting forces for the Trojan war, whence Gilpin gravely inferred that the tree must have been thirteen centuries old when Pausanias saw it. Tacitus calculated that a fig tree was 840 years old because tradition accounted it the tree whereunder the wolf nursed Romulus and Remus. Nor was Pliny's inference more satisfactory, that three hollies still standing in his day on the site of Tibur must have been older than Rome itself, inasmuch as Tibur was older than Rome, and they were the very trees on which Tiburtus, the founder of the former, saw the flight of birds descend which decided him on the site of his city. There is of course no more reason to believe in the reality of Tiburtus than of Francion, the mythical forefather of France, or of Brute the Trojan, the reputed founder of the British Empire.

These things suffice to justify suspicion of trees associated with particular names, such as Wallace's Oak, or trees claiming to have been planted by St. Dominic or Thomas Aquinas. Our only safe guide is measurement, applied year by year to trees alike of known and of unknown age, of insignificant as of vast dimensions, and recorded in some central annual of botanical information, facilitating the work of comparison and the arrival at something like trustworthy averages. The experiment, moreover, has not been sufficiently tried whether our oldest trees are capable of an increased rate of growth by the application of fresh earth round their roots, favourable though the case of the Tortworth chestnut is to the probability of such a result. Until, therefore, such statistics are more numerous than at present, we must be content to rest in the uncertainty with regard to the ages of trees which the preceding attempt to estimate them makes sufficiently manifest, and to arrive at no more definite conclusion than was long ago arrived at by Pliny, that '*vita arborum quarundam immensa credi potest.*' 'The life of some trees may be believed to be prodigious.'

J. A. FARRER.

Gone Over.

I.

‘**C**OME hither, come hither!’ the broom was in blossom all over
 yon rise,
 There went a wide murmur of brown bees about it with songs
 from the wood:
 ‘We shall never be younger; O love, let us forth for the world
 ’neath our eyes—
 Ay, the world is made young e’en as we, and right fair is her
 youth and right good.’

II.

Then there fell the great yearning upon me that never yet went
 into words,
 While lovesome and moansome thereon spake and falter’d the
 dove to the dove,
 And I came at her calling: ‘Inherit, inherit! and sing with the
 birds.’
 I went up to the wood with the child of my heart, and the wife
 of my love.

III.

O pure! O pathetic! Wild hyacinth drank it, the dream light
 apace.
 Not a leaf moved at all ’neath the blue, they hung waiting for
 messages kind;
 Tall cherry trees dropped their white blossom that drifted no whit
 from its place,
 For the south very far out to sea had the lulling low voice of
 the wind.

IV.

And the child's dancing foot gave us part in the ravishment almost
a pain ;

An infinite tremor of life, a fond murmur that cried out on
time,

Ah short ! must all end in the doing and spend itself sweetly in
vain,

And the promise be only fulfilment to lean from the height of
its prime ?

V.

'We shall never be younger !' nay, mock me not fancy, none call
from yon tree :

They have thrown me the world, they went over, went up ; and,
alas ! for my part,

I am left to grow old, and to grieve and to change, but they
change not with me,

They will never be older, the child of my love and the wife of
my heart.

JEAN INGELow.

In the Carquinez Woods.

CHAPTER V.

THE wind was blowing towards the stranger, so that he was nearly upon her when Teresa first took the alarm. He was a man over six feet in height, strongly built, with a slight tendency to a roundness of bulk which suggested reserved rather than impeded energy. His thick beard and moustache were closely cropped around a small and handsome mouth that lisped except when he was excited, but always kept fellowship with his blue eyes in a perpetual smile of half-cynical good humour. His dress was superior to that of the locality; his general expression that of a man of the world, albeit a world of San Francisco, Sacramento, and Murderer's Bar. He advanced towards her with a laugh and an outstretched hand.

'You here!' she gasped, drawing back.

Apparently neither surprised nor mortified at this reception, he answered frankly: 'Yeth. You didn't expect me, I know. But Doloreth showed me the letter you wrote her, and—well—here I am, ready to help you, with two men and a thpare horth waiting outside the woodth on the blind trail.'

'You,—You—here?' she only repeated.

Curson shrugged his shoulders. 'Yeth. Of courth you never expected to thee me again, and leatht of all *here*. I'll admit that I'll thay, I wouldn't if I'd been in your plathe. I'll go further and thay, you didn't want to thee me again—anywhere. But it all cometh to the thame thing; here I am. I read the letter you wrote Doloreth, I read how you were hiding here, under Dunn'th very nothe, with his whole pothe out, cavorting round and barkin' up the wrong tree. I made up my mind to come down here with a few nathty friends of mine and cut you out under Dunn'th nothe, and run you over into Yuba, that'th all.'

'How dared she show you my letter? *you* of all men. How dared she asked *your* help?' continued Teresa fiercely.

'But she didn't athk my help,' he responded coolly. '—'

if I don't think she just calculated I'd be glad to know you were being hunted down and thtarving, that I might put Dunn on your track.'

'You lie!' said Teresa furiously, 'she was my friend. A better friend than those who professed—*more*;' she added, with a contemptuous drawing away of her skirt as if she feared Curson's contamination.

'All right. Thettle that with her when you go back,' continued Curson philosophically. 'We can talk of that on the way, the thing now ith to get up and get out of thethe woods. Come!'

Teresa's only reply was a gesture of scorn.

'I know all that,' continued Curson half soothingly, 'but they're waiting.'

'Let them wait. I shall not go.'

'What will you do?'

'Stay here—till the wolves eat me.'

'Teresa, listen. Teresa—Tita! see here,' he said with sudden energy. 'I swear to God it's all right. I'm willing to let by-gones be by-gones and take a new deal. You shall come back as if nothing had happened and take your old place as before. I don't mind doing the square thing—all round. If that's what you mean, if that's all that stands in the way, why, look upon the thing as settled—there, Tita, old girl, come.'

Careless or oblivious of her stony silence and starting eyes, he attempted to take her hand. But she disengaged herself with a quick movement, drew back and suddenly crouched like a wild animal about to spring. Curson folded his arms as she leaped to her feet; the little dagger she had drawn from her garter flashed menacingly in the air, but she stopped.

The man before her remained erect, impassive and silent, the great trees around and beyond her remained erect, impassive and silent; there was no sound in the dim aisles but the quick panting of her mad passion, no movement in the calm motionless shadow but the trembling of her uplifted steel. Her arm bent and slowly sank, her fingers relaxed, the knife fell from her hand.

'That'th quite enough for a thow,' he said with a return to his former cynical ease and a perceptible tone of relief in his voice. 'It'th the thame old Teretha. Well, then, if you won't go with me, go without me; take the led hortha and cut away. Dick Athley and Peterth will follow you over the county line. If you want thome money, there it ith.' He took a buckskin purse from his pocket. 'If you won't take it from me'—he

hesitated as she made no reply—'Athley 'th flush and ready to lend you thome.'

She had not seemed to hear him, but had stooped in some embarrassment, picked up the knife and hastily hid it, then with averted face and nervous fingers was beginning to tear strips of loose bark from the nearest trunk.

'Well, what do you thay?'

'I don't want any money, and I shall stay here.' She hesitated, looked around her, and then added with an effort, 'I suppose you meant well. Be it so! Let bygones be bygones. You said just now, "It's the same old Teresa." So she is, and seeing she's the same, she's better here than anywhere else.'

There was enough bitterness in her tone to call for Curson's half perfunctory sympathy.

'That be ——' he responded quickly. 'Jutht thay you'll come, Tita, and——' She stopped his half-spoken sentence with a negative gesture. 'You don't understand. I shall stay here.'

'But even if they don't theek you here, you can't live here for ever. The friend that you wrote about who wath tho good to you, you know, can't keep you here alwayth, and are you thure you can alwayth trutht her?'

'It isn't a woman, it's a man.' She stopped short, and coloured to the line of her forehead. 'Who said it was a woman?' she continued fiercely as if to cover her confusion with a burst of gratuitous anger. 'Is that another of your lies?'

Curson's lips, which for a moment had completely lost their smile, were now drawn together in a prolonged whistle. He gazed curiously at her gown, at her hat, at the bow of bright ribbon that tied her black hair, and said, 'Ah!'

'A poor man who has kept my secret,' she went on hurriedly, 'a man as friendless and lonely as myself. Yes,' disregarding Curson's cynical smile, 'a man who has shared everything——'

'Naturally,' suggested Curson.

'And turned himself out of his only shelter to give me a roof and covering,' she continued mechanically, struggling with the new and horrible fancy that his words awakened.

'And thlept every night at Indian Thpring to save your reputation,' said Curson. 'Of courthe.'

Teresa turned very white. Curson was prepared for an outburst of fury—perhaps even another attack. But the crushed and beaten woman only gazed at him with frightened and imploring eyes, 'For God's sake, Dick, don't say that!'

The amiable cynic was staggered. His good-humour and a certain chivalrous instinct he could not repress got the better of him. He shrugged his shoulders. 'What I thay, and what you do, Teretha, needn't make us quarrel. I've no claim on you—I know it. Only—' a vivid sense of the ridiculous, powerful in men of his stamp, completed her victory. 'Only, don't thay anything about my coming down here to cut you out from the—the—the *Sheriff*.' He gave utterance to a short but unaffected laugh, made a slight grimace and turned to go.

Teresa did not join in his mirth. Awkward as it would have been if he had taken a severer view of the subject, she was mortified even amidst her fears and embarrassment at his levity. Just as she had become convinced that his jealousy had made her over-conscious, his apparent good-humoured indifference gave that over-consciousness a guilty significance. Yet this was lost in her sudden alarm as her companion, looking up, uttered an exclamation and placed his hand upon his revolver. With a sinking conviction that the climax had come, Teresa raised her eyes. From the dim aisles beyond, Low was approaching! The catastrophe seemed complete.

She had barely time to utter an imploring whisper: 'In the name of God, not a word to him.' But a change had already come over her companion. It was no longer a parley with a foolish woman; he had to deal with a man like himself. As Low's dark face and picturesque figure came nearer, Mr. Curson's proposed method of dealing with him was made audible.

'Ith it a mulatto or a Thireuth, or both?' he asked, with affected anxiety.

Low's Indian phlegm was impervious to such assault. He turned to Teresa without apparently noticing her companion. 'I turned back,' he said quietly, 'as soon as I knew there were strangers here; I thought you might need me.' She noticed, for the first time, that, in addition to his rifle, he carried a revolver and hunting-knife in his belt.

'Yeth,' returned Curson, with an ineffectual attempt to imitate Low's phlegm, 'but ath I didn't happen to be a thtranger to thith lady perhaps it wathn't necethary, particularly ath I had two friendth——'

'Waiting at the edge of the wood with a led horse,' interrupted Low without addressing him, but apparently continuing his explanation to Teresa. But she turned to Low with feverish anxiety.

'That's so—he is an old friend——' she gave a quick imploring glance at Curson, 'an old friend who came to help me away—he is very kind,' she stammered, turning alternately from the one to the other, 'but I told him there was no hurry—at least to-day—that you—were—very good—too, and—and would hide me a little longer, until your plan—you know *your* plan—' she added, with a look of beseeching significance to Low, 'could be tried.' And then with a helpless conviction that her excuses, motives and emotions, were equally and perfectly transparent to both men, she stopped in a tremble.

'Perhapth it'th jutht ath well, then, that the gentleman came thraight here and didn't tackle my two friendth when he pathed them,' observed Curson, half sarcastically.

'I have not passed your friends, nor have I been near them,' said Low, looking at him for the first time with the same exasperating calm, 'or perhaps I should not be *here* or they *there*. I knew that one man entered the wood a few moments ago, and that two men and four horses remained outside.'

'That's true,' said Teresa to Curson excitedly, 'that's true. He knows all. He can see without looking, hear without listening. He—he——' she stammered, coloured and stopped.

The two men had faced each other. Curson, after his first goodnatured impulse, had retained no wish to regain Teresa, whom he felt he no longer loved, and yet who, for that very reason perhaps, had awakened his chivalrous instincts; Low, equally on his side, was altogether unconscious of any feeling which might grow into a passion, and prevent him from letting her go with another if for her own safety. They were both men of a certain taste and refinement. Yet, in spite of all this, some vague instinct of the baser male animal remained with them, and they were moved to a mutually aggressive attitude in the presence of the female.

One word more and the opening chapter of a sylvan Iliad might have begun. But this modern Helen saw it coming and arrested it with an inspiration of feminine genius. Without being observed she disengaged her knife from her bosom and let it fall as if by accident. It struck the ground with the point of its keen blade, bounded and rolled between them. The two men started and looked at each other with a foolish air. Curson laughed.

'I reckon she can take care of herthelf,' he said, extending his hand to Low. 'I'm off. But if I'm wanted *she'll* know where to find me.' Low took the proffered hand, but neither of the two men looked at Teresa. The reserve of antagonism once broken, a

few words of caution, advice, and encouragement passed between them, in apparent obliviousness of her presence, or her personal responsibility. As Curson at last nodded a farewell to her, Low insisted upon accompanying him as far as the horses, and in another moment she was again alone.

She had saved a quarrel between them at the sacrifice of herself, for her vanity was still keen enough to feel that this exhibition of her old weakness had degraded her in their eyes, and—worse—had lost the respect her late restraint had won from Low. They had treated her like a child or a crazy woman, perhaps even now were exchanging criticisms upon her—perhaps pitying her! Yet she had prevented a quarrel, a fight—possibly the death of either one or the other of these men who despised her, for none better knew than she the trivial beginning and desperate end of these encounters. Would they—would Low ever realise it, and forgive her? Her small, dark hands went up to her eyes and she sank upon the ground. She looked through tear-veiled lashes upon the mute and giant witnesses of her deceit and passion, and tried to draw, from their immoveable calm, strength and consolation as before. But even they seemed to stand apart—reserved and forbidding.

When Low returned she tried to gather from his eyes and manner what had passed between him and her former lover. But, beyond a mere gentle abstraction at times, he retained his usual calm. She was at last forced to allude to it herself with simulated recklessness.

‘I suppose I didn’t get a very good character from my last place?’ she said with a laugh.

‘I don’t understand you,’ he replied, in evident sincerity.

She bit her lip and was silent. But as they were returning home, she said gently, ‘I hope you were not angry with me for the lie I told when I spoke of “your plan.” I could not give the real reason for not returning with—with—that man. But it’s not all a lie. I have a plan—if you haven’t. When you are ready to go to Sacramento to take your place, dress me as an Indian boy, paint my face, and let me go with you. You can leave me—there—you know.’

‘It’s not a bad idea,’ he responded gravely. ‘We will see.’

On the next day and the next the *rencontre* seemed to be forgotten. The herbarium was already filled with rare specimens. Teresa had even overcome her feminine repugnance to ‘bugs’ and creeping things so far as to assist in his entomological collec-

tion. He had drawn from a sacred *cache* in the hollow of a tree the few worn text-books from which he had studied.

'They seem very precious,' she said, with a smile.

'Very,' he replied gravely. 'There was one with plates that the ants ate up, and it will be six months before I can afford to buy another.'

Teresa glanced hurriedly over his well-worn buckskin suit, at his calico shirt with its pattern almost obliterated by countless washings, and became thoughtful. 'I suppose you couldn't buy one at Indian Spring,' she said innocently.

For once Low was startled out of his phlegm. 'Indian Spring,' he ejaculated; 'perhaps not even in San Francisco. These came from the States.'

'How did you get them?' persisted Teresa.

'I bought them for skins I got over the ridge.'

'I didn't mean that—but no matter. Then you mean to sell that bear-skin, don't you?' she added.

Low had, in fact, already sold it, the proceeds having been invested in a gold ring for Miss Nellie, which she scrupulously did not wear except in his presence. In his singular truthfulness he would have frankly confessed it to Teresa, but the secret was not his own. He contented himself with saying that he had disposed of it at Indian Spring. Teresa started and communicated unconsciously some of her nervousness to her companion. They gazed in each other's eyes with a troubled expression.

'Do you think it was wise to sell that particular skin, which might be identified?' she asked timidly.

Low knitted his arched brows, but felt a strange sense of relief. 'Perhaps not,' he said carelessly; 'but it's too late now to mend matters.'

That afternoon she wrote several letters and tore them up. One, however, she retained, and handed it to Low to post at Indian Spring, whither he was going. She called his attention to the superscription being the same as the previous letter, and added, with affected gaiety, 'But if the answer isn't as prompt, perhaps it will be pleasanter than the last.' Her quick feminine eye noticed a little excitement in his manner and a more studious attention to his dress. Only a few days before she would not have allowed this to pass without some mischievous allusion to his mysterious sweetheart; it troubled her greatly now to find that she could not bring herself to this household pleasantry, and that her lip trembled, and her eye grew moist as he parted from her.

The afternoon passed slowly; he had said he might not return to supper until late, nevertheless a strange restlessness took possession of her as the day wore on; she put aside her work, the darning of his stockings, and rambled aimlessly through the woods. She had wandered, she knew not how far, when she was suddenly seized with the same vague sense of a foreign presence which she had felt before. Could it be Curson again—with a word of warning? No! she knew it was not he; so subtle had her sense become that she even fancied that she detected in the invisible aura projected by the unknown, no significance or relation to herself or Low, and felt no fear. Nevertheless she deemed it wisest to seek the protection of her sylvan bower, and hurried swiftly thither.

But not so quickly nor fixedly that she did not once or twice pause in her flight to examine the new comer from behind a friendly trunk. He was a stranger—a young fellow with a brown moustache, wearing heavy Mexican spurs in his riding boots, whose tinkling he apparently did not care to conceal. He had perceived her, and was evidently pursuing her, but so awkwardly and timidly that she eluded him with ease. When she had reached the security of the hollow tree and pulled the curtain of bark before the narrow opening, with her eye to the interstices, she waited his coming. He arrived breathlessly in the open space before the tree where the bear once lay; the dazed, bewildered, and half awed expression of his face as he glanced around him and through the openings of the forest aisles, brought a faint smile to her saddened face. At last he called in a half-embarrassed voice,

‘Miss Nellie!’

The smile faded from Teresa’s cheek. Who was ‘Miss Nellie’? She pressed her ear to the opening. ‘Miss Wynne!’ the voice again called, but was lost in the echoless woods. Devoured with a new and gratuitous curiosity, in another moment Teresa felt she would have disclosed herself at any risk, but the stranger rose and began to retrace his steps. Long after his tinkling spurs were lost in the distance, Teresa remained like a statue staring at the place where he had stood. Then she suddenly turned like a mad woman, glanced down at the gown she was wearing, tore it from her back as if it had been a polluted garment, and stamped upon it in a convulsion of rage. And then, with her beautiful bare arms clasped together over her head, she threw herself upon her couch in a tempest of tears.

CHAPTER VI.

WHEN Miss Nellie reached the first mining extension of Indian Spring, which surrounded it like a fosse, she descended for one instant into one of its trenches, opened her parasol, removed her duster, hid it under a boulder, and with a few shivers and cat-like strokes of her soft hands, not only obliterated all material traces of the stolen cream of Carquinez Woods, but assumed a feline demureness quite inconsistent with any moral dereliction. Unfortunately she forgot to remove at the same time a certain ring from her third finger which she had put on with her duster and had worn at no other time. With this slight exception, the benignant fate which always protected that young person brought her in contact with the Burnham girls at one end of the main street as the returning coach to Excelsior entered the other and enabled her to take leave of them before the coach office with a certain ostentation of parting which struck Mr. Jack Brace, who was lingering at the doorway into a state of utter bewilderment.

Here was Miss Nellie Wynne, the belle of Excelsior, calm, quiet, self-possessed, her chaste cambric skirts and dainty shoes as fresh as when she had left her father's house; but where was the woman of the brown duster? and where the yellow-dressed apparition of the woods? He was feebly repeating to himself his mental adjuration of a few hours before when he caught her eye and was taken with a blush and a fit of coughing. Could he have been such an egregious fool—and was it not plainly written on his embarrassed face for her to read?

'Are we going down together?' asked Miss Nellie with an exceptionally gracious smile.

There was neither affectation nor coquetry in this advance. The girl had no idea of Brace's suspicion of her, nor did any uneasy desire to placate or deceive a possible rival of Low's prompt her graciousness. She simply wished to shake off in this encounter the already stale excitement of the past two hours, as she had shaken the dust of the woods from her clothes. It was characteristic of her irresponsible nature and transient susceptibilities that she actually enjoyed the relief of change; more than that, I fear, she looked upon this infidelity to a past dubious pleasure as a moral principle. A mild open flirtation with a recognised man like Brace, after her secret passionate tryst with a nameless nomad like Low was an ethical equipoise that seemed proper to one of her religious education.

Brace was only too happy to profit by Miss Nellie's condescension; he at once secured the seat by her side and spent the four hours and a half of their return journey to Excelsior in blissful but timid communion with her. If he did not dare to confess his past suspicions, he was equally afraid to venture upon the boldness he had premeditated a few hours before. He was therefore obliged to take a middle course of slightly egotistical narration of his own personal adventures, with which he beguiled the young girl's ear. This he only departed from once, to describe to her a valuable grizzly bear skin which he had seen that day for sale at Indian Spring, with a view to divining her possible acceptance of it for a 'buggy robe;' and once to comment upon a ring which she had inadvertently disclosed in pulling off her glove.

'It's only an old family keepsake,' she added with easy mendacity. And affecting to recognise in Mr. Brace's curiosity a not unnatural excuse for toying with her charming fingers, she hid them in chaste and virginal seclusion in her lap, until she could recover the ring and resume her glove.

A week passed; a week of peculiar and desiccating heat for even those dry Sierra table lands. The long days were filled with impalpable dust and acrid haze suspended in the motionless air; the nights were breathless and dewless—the cold wind which usually swept down from the snow line was laid to sleep over a dark monotonous level, whose horizon was pricked with the eating fires of burning forest crests. The lagging coach of Indian Spring drove up at Excelsior and precipitated its passengers with an accompanying cloud of dust before the Excelsior Hotel. As they emerged from the coach, Mr. Brace, standing in the doorway, closely scanned their begrimed and almost unrecognisable faces. They were the usual type of travellers; a single professional man in dirty black, a few traders in tweeds and flannels, a sprinkling of miners in red and grey shirts, a Chinaman, a negro, and a Mexican packer or muleteer. This latter for a moment mingled with the crowd in the bar-room, and even penetrated the corridor and dining-room of the hotel, as if impelled by a certain semi-civilised curiosity, and then strolled with a lazy dragging step—half-impaired by the enormous leather leggings, chains, and spurs peculiar to that class—down the main street. The darkness was gathering, but the muleteer indulged in the same childish scrutiny of the dimly lighted shops, magazines, and saloons, and even of the occasional groups of citizens at the street corners. Apparently young, as far as the outlines of his figure could be seen, he

seemed to show even more than the usual concern of masculine Excelsior in the charms of womankind. The few female figures about at that hour, or visible at window or verandah received his marked attention, he respectfully followed the two auburn-haired daughters of Deacon Johnson on their way to choir meeting to the door of the church. Not content with that act of discreet gallantry, after they had entered he managed to slip in unperceived behind them.

The memorial of the Excelsior gamblers' generosity was a modern building, large and pretentious for even Mr. Wynne's popularity, and had been good-humouredly known in the characteristic language of the generous donors as one of the 'biggest religious bluffs' on record. Its groined rafters, which were so new and spicy that they still suggested their native forest aisles, seldom covered more than a hundred devotees, and in the rambling choir, with its bare space for the future organ, the few choristers gathered round a small harmonium were lost in the deepening shadow of that summer evening. The muleteer remained hidden in the obscurity of the vestibule. After a few moments' desultory conversation in which it appeared that the unexpected absence of Miss Nellie Wynne, their leader, would prevent their practising, the choristers withdrew. The stranger, who had listened eagerly, drew back in the darkness as they passed out, and remained for a few moments a vague and motionless figure in the silent church. Then coming cautiously to the window, the flapping broad-brimmed hat was put aside, and the faint light of the dying day shone in the black eyes of Teresa! Despite her face darkened with dye and disfigured with dust, the matted hair piled and twisted around her head, the strange dress and boyish figure, one swift glance from under her raised lashes betrayed her identity.

She turned aside mechanically into the first pew, picked up and opened a hymn book. Her eyes became riveted on a name written on the title-page, 'Nellie Wynne.' *Her* name, and *her* book. The instinct that had guided her here was right; the slight gossip of her fellow-passengers was right; this was the clergyman's daughter whose praise filled all mouths. This was the unknown girl the stranger was seeking, but who in her turn perhaps had been seeking Low—the girl who absorbed his fancy—the secret of his absences, his preoccupation—his coldness! This was the girl whom to see—perhaps in his arms, she was now perilling her liberty and her life unknown to him. A slight odour, some faint perfume of its owner, came from the book; it was the same she

had noticed in the dress Low had given her. She flung the volume to the ground, and, throwing her arms over the back of the pew before her, buried her face in her hands.

In that light and attitude she might have seemed some rapt acolyte abandoned to self-communion. But whatever yearning her soul might have had for higher sympathy or deeper consolation, I fear that the spiritual Tabernacle of Excelsior and the Reverend Mr. Wynne did not meet that requirement. She only felt the dry oven-like heat of that vast shell, empty of sentiment and beauty, hollow in its pretence and dreary in its desolation. She only saw in it a chief altar for the glorification of this girl who had absorbed even the pure worship of her companion and converted and degraded his sublime paganism to her petty creed. With a woman's withering contempt for her own art displayed in another woman, she thought how she herself could have touched him with the peace that the majesty of their woodland aisles—so unlike this pillared sham—had taught her own passionate heart, had she but dared. Mingling with this imperfect theology, she felt she could have proved to him also that a brunette and a woman of her experience was better than an immature blonde. She began to loathe herself for coming hither, and dreaded to meet his face. Here a sudden thought struck her. What if he had not come here? What if she had been mistaken? What if her rash interpretation of his absence from the wood that night was simple madness? What if he should return—if he had already returned? She rose to her feet, whitening, yet joyful with the thought. She would return at once—what was the girl to her now? Yet there was time to satisfy herself if he were at *her* house. She had been told where it was; she could find it in the dark; an open door or window would betray some sign or sound of the occupants. She rose, replaced her hat over her eyes, knotted her flaunting scarf around her throat, groped her way to the door, and glided into the outer darkness.

CHAPTER VII.

It was quite dark when Mr. Jack Brace stopped before Father Wynne's open door. The windows were also invitingly open to the wayfarer, as were the pastoral counsels of Father Wynne, delivered to some favoured guest within, in a tone of voice loud enough for a pulpit. Jack Brace paused. The visitor was the convalescent sheriff, Jim Dunn, who had publicly commemorated his recovery by making his first call upon the father of his

innamorata. The Reverend Mr. Wynne had been expatiating upon the unremitting heat as a possible precursor of forest fires, and exhibiting some catholic knowledge of the designs of a Deity in that regard, and what should be the policy of the Legislature, when Mr. Brace concluded to enter. Mr. Wynne and the wounded man, who occupied an arm-chair by the window, were the only occupants of the room. But in spite of the former's ostentatious greeting, Brace could see that his visit was inopportune and unwelcome. The Sheriff nodded a quick impatient recognition, which, had it not been accompanied by an anathema on the heat, might have been taken as a personal insult. Neither spoke of Miss Nellie, although it was patent to Brace that they were momentarily expecting her. All of which went far to strengthen a certain wavering purpose in his mind.

'Ah, ha! strong language, Mr. Dunn,' said Father Wynne, referring to the Sheriff's adjuration, 'but "out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh." Job, sir, cursed, we are told, and even expressed himself in vigorous Hebrew regarding his birthday. Ha, ha! I'm not opposed to that. When I have often wrestled with the spirit I confess I have sometimes said, "D—n you." Yes, sir, "D—n you."'

There was something so unutterably vile in the reverend gentleman's utterance and emphasis of this oath that the two men, albeit both easy and facile blasphemers, felt uneasy. As the purest of actresses is apt to overdo the rakishness of a gay Lothario, Father Wynne's immaculate conception of an imprecation was something terrible. But he added, 'The law ought to interfere with the reckless use of camp fires in the woods in such weather, by packers and prospectors.'

'It isn't so much the work of white men,' broke in Brace, 'as it is of Greasers,¹ Chinamen and Diggers,² especially Diggers. There's that blasted Low, ranges the whole Carquinez Woods as if they were his. I reckon he ain't particular just where he throws his matches.'

'But he's not a Digger; he's a Cherokee, and only a half-breed at that,' interpolated Wynne. 'Unless,' he added, with the artful suggestion of the betrayed trust of a too credulous Christian, 'he deceived me in this as in other things.'

In what other things Low had deceived him he did not say; but, to the astonishment of both men, Dunn growled a dissent to

¹ *Greasers*, Californian slang for a mixed race of Mexicans and Indians.

² *Diggers*, a local name for a peaceful tribe of Indians inhabiting Northern California, who live on roots and herbs.

Brace's proposition. Either from some secret irritation with that possible rival, or impatience at the prolonged absence of Nellie, he had 'had enough of that sort of hog-wash ladled out to him for genuine liquor.' As to the Carquinez Woods, he (Dunn) 'didn't know why Low hadn't as much right there as if he'd grabbed it under a preemption law and didn't live there.' With this hit at certain speculations of Father Wynne in public lands for a homestead, he added that 'if they (Brace and Wynne) could bring him along any older American settler than an Indian, they might rake down his (Dunn's) pile.' Unprepared for this turn in the conversation, Wynne hastened to explain that he did not refer to the pure aborigine, whose gradual extinction no one regretted more than himself, but to the mongrel, who inherited only the vices of civilisation. 'There should be a law, sir, against the mingling of races. There are men, sir, who violate the laws of the Most High by living with Indian women—squaw men, sir, as they are called.'

Dunn rose with a face livid with weakness and passion. 'Who dares say that? They are a —— sight better than sneaking Northern Abolitionists, who married their daughters to buck niggers like——' But a spasm of pain withheld this Parthian shot at the politics of his two companions, and he sank back helplessly in his chair.

An awkward silence ensued. The three men looked at each other in embarrassment and confusion. Dunn felt that he had given way to a gratuitous passion, Wynne had a vague presentiment that he had said something that imperilled his daughter's prospects, and Brace was divided between an angry retort and the secret purpose already alluded to.

'It's all the heat,' said Dunn, with a forced smile, pushing away the whisky which Wynne had ostentatiously placed before him.

'Of course,' said Wynne hastily; 'only it's a pity Nellie ain't here to give you her smelling-salts. She ought to be back now,' he added, no longer mindful of Brace's presence; 'the coach is over-due now, though I reckon the heat made Yuba Bill take it easy at the up grade.'

'If you mean the coach from Indian Spring,' said Brace quietly, 'it's in already; but Miss Nellie didn't come on it.'

'Maybe she got out at the Crossing,' said Wynne cheerfully; 'she sometimes does.'

'She didn't take the coach at Indian Spring,' returned Brace, 'because I saw it leave, and passed it on Buckskin ten minutes ago coming up the hills.'

'She's stopped over at Burnham's,' said Wynne reflectively. Then, in response to the significant silence of his guests, he added, in a tone of chagrin which his forced heartiness could not disguise: 'Well, boys, it's a disappointment all round; but we must take the lesson as it comes. I'll go over to the coach office and see if she's sent any word. Make yourselves at home until I return.'

When the door had closed behind him, Brace arose and took his hat as if to go. With his hand on the lock, he turned to his rival, who, half hidden in the gathering darkness, still seemed unable to comprehend his ill-luck.

'If you're waiting for that bald-headed fraud to come back with the truth about his daughter,' said Brace coolly, 'you'd better send for your things and take up your lodgings here.'

'What do you mean?' said Dunn sternly.

'I mean that she's not at the Burnhams; I mean that he either does or does not know *where* she is, and that in either case he is not likely to give you information. But *I* can.'

'You can?'

'Yes.'

'Then, where is she?'

'In the Carquinez Woods, in the arms of the man you were just defending—Low, the half-breed.'

The room had become so dark that from the road nothing could be distinguished. Only the momentary sound of struggling feet was heard.

'Sit down,' said Brace's voice, 'and don't be a fool. You're too weak, and it ain't a fair fight. Let go your hold. I'm not lying—I wish to God I was!'

There was a silence, and Brace resumed, 'We've been rivals, I know. Maybe I thought my chance as good as yours. If what I say ain't truth, we'll stand as we stood before—and if you're on the shoot, I'm your man when you like, where you like, or on sight if you choose. But I can't bear to see another man played upon as I've been played upon—given dead away as I've been. It ain't on the square.'

'There,' he continued after a pause, 'that's right, now steady. Listen. A week ago that girl went down just like this to Indian Spring. It was given out, like this, that she went to the Burnhams. I don't mind saying, Dunn, that I went down myself, all on the square, thinking I might get a show to talk to her, just as *you* might have done, you know, if you had my chance. I didn't come across her anywhere. But two men that I met thought they

recognised her in a disguise going into the woods. Not suspecting anything, I went after her; saw her at a distance in the middle of the woods in another dress that I can swear to, and was just coming up to her when she vanished—went like a squirrel up a tree or down like a gopher in the ground, but vanished.'

'Is that all?' said Dunn's voice. 'And just because you were a fool, or had taken a little too much whisky you thought——'

'Steady. That's just what I said to myself,' interrupted Brace coolly, 'particularly when I saw her that same afternoon in another dress saying "Goodbye" to the Burnhams, as fresh as a rose and as cold as those snow-peaks. Only one thing—she had a ring on her finger she never wore before, and didn't expect me to see.'

'What if she did? She might have bought it. I reckon she hasn't to consult you,' broke in Dunn's voice sternly.

'She didn't buy it,' continued Brace quietly. 'Low gave that Jew trader a bear-skin in exchange for it, and presented it to her. I found that out two days afterwards. I found out that out of the whole afternoon she spent less than an hour with the Burnhams; I found out that she bought a duster like the disguise the two men saw her in; I found the yellow dress she wore that day, hanging up in Low's cabin—the place where I saw her go—the *rendezvous where she meets him*. Oh, you're listenin', are you? Stop! SIT DOWN!'

'I discovered it by accident,' continued the voice of Brace when all was again quiet, 'it was hidden as only a squirrel or an Injin can hide when they improve upon nature. When I was satisfied that that girl had been in the woods, I was determined to find out where she vanished, and went there again. Prospecting around, I picked up at the foot of one of the biggest trees this yer old memorandum-book with grasses and herbs stuck in it. I remembered that I'd heard old Wynne say that Low, like the —— nigger that he was, collected these herbs, only he pretended it was for science. I reckoned the book was his and that he mightn't be far away. I lay low and waited. Bimeby I saw a lizard running down the root. When he got sight of me he stopped.'

'—— the lizard. What's that got to do with where she is now?'

'Everything. That lizard had a piece of sugar in his mouth. Where did it come from? I made him drop it and calculated he'd go back for more. He did. He scooted up that tree and slipped in under some hanging strips of bark. I shoved 'em aside and found an opening to the hollow where they do their housekeeping.

'But you didn't see her there—and how do you know she is there now?'

'I determined to make it sure. When she left to-day, I started an hour ahead of her and hid myself at the edge of the woods. An hour after the coach arrived at Indian Spring, she came there in a brown duster and was joined by him. I'd have followed them, but the d—d hound has the ears of a squirrel, and though I was five hundred yards from him he was on his guard.'

'Guard be blessed! Wasn't you armed? Why didn't you go for him?' said Dunn furiously.

'I reckoned I'd leave that for you,' said Brace coolly. 'If he'd killed me—and if he'd even covered me with his rifle, he'd been sure to let daylight through me at double the distance—I shouldn't have been any better off, nor you neither. If I'd killed *him* it would have been your duty as Sheriff to put me in jail, and I reckon it wouldn't have broken your heart, Jim Dunn, to have got rid of *two* rivals instead of one. Hullo! Where are you going?'

'Going?' said Dunn hoarsely. 'Going to the Carquinez Woods, by God! to kill him before her. *I'll* risk it, if you daren't. Let me succeed and you can hang *me* and take the girl yourself.'

'Sit down, sit down. Don't be a fool, Jim Dunn! You wouldn't keep the saddle a hundred yards. Did I say I wouldn't help you? No. If you're willing, we'll run the risk together, but it must be in my way. Hear me. I'll drive you down there in a buggy before daylight, and we'll surprise them in the cabin or as they leave the wood. But you must come as if to arrest him for some offence—say, as an escaped Digger from the Reservation, a dangerous tramp, a destroyer of public property in the forests, a suspected road agent—or anything to give you the right to hunt him. The exposure of him and Nellie, don't you see, must be your making. If he resists, kill him on the spot and nobody 'll blame you; if he goes peaceably with you, and you once get him in Excelsior jail, when the story gets out that he's taken the belle of Excelsior for his squaw, if you'd the angels for your *posse* you couldn't keep the boys from hanging him to the first tree. What's that?'

He walked to the window and looked out cautiously.

'If it was the old man coming back and listenin',' he said, after

a pause; 'it can't be helped. He'll hear it soon enough, if he don't suspect something already.'

'Look yer, Brace,' broke in Dunn hoarsely. '— if I understand you, or you me. That dog Low has got to answer to *me*, not to the *law*! I'll take my risk of killing him—on sight and on the square. I don't reckon to handicap myself with a warrant, and I am not going to draw him out with a lie. You hear me? That's me—all the time!'

'Then you calkilate to go down thar,' said Brace contemptuously, 'yell out for him and Nellie, and let him line you on a rest from the first tree as if you were a grizzly.'

There was a pause. 'What's that you were saying just now about a bear-skin he sold?' asked Dunn slowly, as if reflecting.

'He exchanged a bear-skin,' replied Bruce, 'with a single hole right over the heart. He's a dead shot, I tell you.'

'— his shooting,' said Dunn. 'I'm not thinking of that. How long ago did he bring in that bear-skin?'

'About two weeks, I reckon. Why?'

'Nothing! Look you, Brace, you mean well—thar's my hand. I'll go down with you there—but not as the Sheriff. I'm going there as Jim Dunn—and you can come along as a white man to see things fixed on the square—Come!'

Brace hesitated. 'You'll think better of my plan before you get there—but I've said I'd stand by you, and I will. Come, then. There's no time to lose.'

They passed out into the darkness together.

'What are you waiting for?' said Dunn impatiently, as Brace, who was supporting him by the arm, suddenly halted at the corner of the house.

'Someone was listening—did you not see him? Was it the old man?' asked Brace hurriedly.

'Blast the old man! It was only one of them Mexican packers chock-full of whisky, and trying to hold up the house. What are you thinking of?—we shall be late.'

In spite of his weakness, the wounded man hurriedly urged Brace forward, until they reached the latter's lodgings. To his surprise the horse and buggy were already before the door.

'Then you reckoned to go, anyway?' said Dunn, with a searching look at his companion.

'I calkilated *somebody* would go,' returned Brace evasively, patting the impatient Buckskin, 'but come in and take a drink before we leave.'

Dunn started out of a momentary abstraction, put his hand on his hip and mechanically entered the house. They had scarcely raised the glasses to their lips when a sudden rattle of wheels was heard in the street. Brace set down his glass and ran to the window.

'It's the mare bolted,' he said with an oath. 'We've kept her too long standing. Follow me.' And he dashed down the staircase into the street. Dunn followed with difficulty; when he reached the door he was already confronted by his breathless companion. 'She's gone off on a run, and I'll swear there was a man in the buggy!' He stopped and examined the halter-strap still fastened to the fence. 'Cut! by God!'

Dunn turned pale with passion. 'Who's got another horse and buggy?' he demanded.

'The new blacksmith in Main Street, but we won't get it by borrowing,' said Brace.

'How then?' asked Dunn savagely.

'Seize it, as the Sheriff of Yuba and his deputy, pursuing a confederate of the Ingin Low—THE HORSE THIEF!'

CHAPTER VIII.

THE brief hour of darkness that preceded the dawn was that night intensified by a dense smoke, which, after blotting out horizon and sky, dropped a thick veil on the high road and the silent streets of Indian Spring. As the buggy containing Sheriff Dunn and Brace dashed through the obscurity, Brace suddenly turned to his companion.

'Someone ahead!'

The two men bent forward over the dashboard. Above the steady plunging of their own horse-hoofs they could hear the quicker irregular beat of other hoofs in the darkness before them.

'It's that horse thief!' said Dunn in a savage whisper. 'Bear to the right, and hand me the whip.'

A dozen cuts of the cruel lash, and their maddened horse, bounding at each stroke, broke into a wild canter. The frail vehicle swayed from side to side at each spring of the elastic shafts. Steadying himself by one hand on the low rail, Dunn drew his revolver with the other. 'Sing out to him to pull up, or we'll fire. My voice is clean gone,' he added in a husky whisper.

They were so near that they could distinguish the bulk of a vehicle careering from side to side in the blackness ahead. Dunn deliberately raised his weapon. 'Sing out!' he repeated impa-

tiently. But Brace, who was still keeping in the shadow, suddenly grasped his companion's arm.

'Hush! It's not Buckskin,' he whispered hurriedly.

'Are you sure?'

'Don't you see we're gaining on him?' replied the other contemptuously. Dunn grasped his companion's hand and pressed it silently. Even in that supreme moment this horseman's tribute to the fugitive Buckskin forestalled all baser considerations of pursuit and capture.

In twenty seconds they were abreast of the stranger, crowding his horse and buggy nearly into the ditch; Brace keenly watchful, Dunn suppressed and pale. In half a minute they were leading him a length; and when their horse again settled down to his steady work, the stranger was already lost in the circling dust that followed them. But the victors seemed disappointed. The obscurity had completely hidden all but the vague outlines of the mysterious driver.

'He's not our game anyway,' whispered Dunn. 'Drive on.'

'But if it was some friend of his,' suggested Brace uneasily, 'what would you do?'

'What I said I'd do,' responded Dunn savagely. 'I don't want five minutes to do it in either; we'll be half-an-hour ahead of that fool, whoever he is. Look here, all you've got to do is to put me in the trail to that cabin. Stand back of me out of gun-shot, alone if you like as my deputy, or with any number you can pick up as my *posse*. If he gets by me as Nellie's lover, you may shoot him or take him as a horse thief if you like.'

'Then you won't shoot him on sight?'

'Not till I've had a word with him.'

'But——'

'I've chirped,' said the Sheriff gravely. 'Drive on.'

For a few moments only the plunging hoofs and rattling wheels were heard. A dull lurid glow began to define the horizon. They were silent until an abatement of the smoke, the vanishing of the gloomy horizon line, and a certain impenetrability in the darkness ahead, showed them they were nearing the Carquinez Woods. But they were surprised on entering them to find the dim aisles alight with a faint mystic Aurora. The tops of the towering spires above them had caught the gleam of the distant forest fires, and reflected it as from a gilded dome.

'It would be hot work if the Carquinez Woods should conclude to take a hand in this yer little game that's goin' on over on the

Divide yonder,' said Brace, securing his horse and glancing at the spires overhead. 'I reckon I'd rather take a back seat at Injin Spring when the show commences.'

Dunn did not reply, but buttoning his coat placed one hand on his companion's shoulder and sullenly bade him 'lead the way.' Advancing slowly and with difficulty the desperate man might have been taken for a peaceful invalid returning from an early morning stroll. His right hand was buried thoughtfully in the side pocket of his coat. Only Brace knew that it rested on the handle of his pistol.

From time to time the latter stopped and consulted the faint trail with a minuteness that showed recent careful study. Suddenly he paused. 'I made a blaze¹ hereabouts to show where to leave the trail. There it is,' he added pointing to a slight notch cut in the trunk of an adjoining tree.

'But we've just passed one,' said Dunn, 'if that's what you're looking after, a hundred yards back.'

Brace uttered an oath and ran back in the direction signified by his companion. Presently he returned with a smile of triumph.

'They've suspected something. It's a clever trick, but it won't hold water. That blaze which was done to muddle you was cut with an axe; this which I made was done with a bowie knife. It's the real one. We're not far off now. Come on.'

They proceeded cautiously at right angles with the 'blazed' tree for ten minutes more. The heat was oppressive; drops of perspiration rolled from the forehead of the Sheriff, and at times when he attempted to steady his uncertain limbs, his hands shrank from the heated, blistering bark of the trunks he touched with ungloved palms.

'Here we are,' said Brace, pausing at last. 'Do you see that biggest tree with the root stretching out half-way across to the opposite one?'

'No, it's further to the right and abreast of the dead brush,' interrupted Dunn quickly, with a sudden revelation that this was the spot where he had found the dead bear on the night Teresa escaped.

'That's so,' responded Brace in astonishment.

'And the opening is on the other side, opposite the dead brush,' said Dunn.

'Then you know it?' said Brace, suspiciously.

¹ A notch cut in the bark of a tree by western hunters or explorers as a guide in the wilderness.

'I reckon!' responded Dunn, grimly. 'That's enough! Fall back!'

To the surprise of his companion he lifted his head erect, and with a strong firm step walked directly to the tree. Reaching it, he planted himself squarely before the opening.

'Halloo,' he said.

There was no reply. A squirrel scampered away close to his feet. Brace far in the distance, after an ineffectual attempt to distinguish his companion through the intervening trunks, took off his coat, leaned against a tree and lit a cigar.

'Come out of that cabin,' continued Dunn, in a clear resonant voice. 'Come out before I drag you out!'

'All right "Captain Scott." Don't shoot and I'll come down,' said a voice as clear and as high as his own. The hanging strips of bark were dashed aside and a woman leaped lightly to the ground.

Dunn staggered back: 'Teresa! by the Eternal.'

It was Teresa! The old Teresa! Teresa a hundred times more vicious, reckless, hysterical, extravagant and outrageous than before. Teresa, staring with tooth and eye, sunburnt and embrowned, her hair hanging down her shoulders, and her shawl drawn tightly around her neck.

'Teresa it is! the same old gal! Here we are again! Return of the favourite in her original character! For two weeks only! Houp là! Tshk!' and, catching her yellow skirt with her fingers, she pirouetted before the astounded man, and ended in a pose. Recovering himself with an effort, Dunn dashed forward and seized her by the wrist. 'Answer me, woman! Is that Low'scabin?'

'It is.'

'Who occupies it besides?'

'I do.'

'And who else?'

'Well,' drawled Teresa slowly, with an extravagant affectation of modesty. 'Nobody else but us, I reckon. Two's company, you know, and three's none.'

'Stop! Will you swear that there isn't a young girl, his—his sweetheart—concealed there with you?'

The fire in Teresa's eye was genuine as she answered steadily: 'Well, it ain't my style to put up with that sort of thing; at least, it wasn't over at Yolo, and you know it, Jim Dunn, or I wouldn't be here.'

'Yes, yes,' said Dunn hurriedly. 'But I'm a fool, or worse, the fool of a fool. Tell me, Teresa, is this man Low your lover?'

Teresa lowered her eyes as if in maidenly confusion.

'Well, if I'd known that *you* had any feeling of your own about it—if you'd spoken sooner——'

'Answer me—you devil!'

'He is.'

'And he has been with you here—yesterday—to-night?'

'He has.'

'Enough.' He laughed a weak foolish laugh, and turning pale suddenly lapsed against a tree. He would have fallen, but with a quick instinct Teresa sprang to his side and supported him gently to a root. The action over, they both looked astounded.

'I reckon that wasn't much like either you or me,' said Dunn slowly, 'was it? But if you'd let me drop then you'd have stretched out the biggest fool in the Sierras.' He paused and looked at her curiously. 'What's come over you; blessed if I seem to know you now.'

She was very pale again, and quiet; that was all.

'Teresa! look here! When I was laid up yonder in Excelsior I said I wanted to get well for only two things. One was to hunt you down, the other to marry Nellie Wynne. When I came here I thought that last thing could never be. I came here expecting to find her here with Low, and kill him—perhaps kill her too. I never even thought of you; not once. You might have risen up before me—between me and him—and I'd have passed you by. And now that I find it's all a mistake, and it was you, not her I was looking for—why——'

'Why,' she interrupted bitterly, 'you'll just take me, of course, to save your time and earn your salary. I'm ready.'

'But *I'm* not, just yet,' he said faintly. 'Help me up.'

She mechanically assisted him to his feet.

'Now stand where you are,' he added, 'and don't move beyond this tree till I return.'

He straightened himself with an effort, clenched his fists until the nails were nearly buried in his palms, and strode with a firm, steady step in the direction he had come. In a few moments he returned and stood before her.

'I've sent away my deputy—the man who brought me here, the fool who thought you were Nellie. He knows now he made a mistake. But who it was he mistook for Nellie he does not know, nor shall ever know, nor shall any living being know, other than myself. And when I leave the wood to-day I shall know it no longer. You are safe here as far as I am concerned, but I cannot

screen you from others prying. Let Low take you away from here as soon as he can.'

'Let him take me away? Ah, yes. For what?'

'To save you,' said Dunn. 'Look here, Teresa! Without knowing it, you lifted me out of hell just now, and because of the wrong I might have done her—for *her* sake, I spare you and shirk my duty.'

'For her sake!' gasped the woman, 'for her sake! Oh, yes! Go on.'

'Well,' said Dunn gloomily, 'I reckon perhaps you'd as lieve left me in hell for all the love you bear me. And maybe you've grudge enough agin me still to wish I'd found her and him together.'

'You think so,' she said, turning her head away.

'There. I didn't mean to make you cry. Maybe you wouldn't then. Only tell that fellow to take you out of this, and not run away the next time he sees a man coming.'

'He didn't run,' said Teresa with flashing eyes. 'I—I—I sent him away,' she stammered. Then, suddenly turning with fury upon him, she broke out, 'Run! Run from you! Ha, ha! You said just now I'd a grudge against you. Well, listen, Jim Dunn. I'd only to bring you in range of that young man's rifle and you'd have dropped in your tracks like—'

'Like that bar the other night,' said Dunn, with a short laugh. 'So *that* was your little game?' He checked his laugh suddenly—a cloud passed over his face. 'Look here, Teresa,' he said with an assumption of carelessness that was as transparent as it was utterly incompatible with his frank, open selfishness, 'What became of that bar? The skin—eh? that was worth something?'

'Yes,' said Teresa quietly. 'Low exchanged it and got a ring for me from that trader Isaacs. It was worth more, you bet. And the ring didn't fit either——'

'Yes,' interrupted Dunn with an almost childish eagerness.

'And I made him take it back, and get the value in money. I hear that Isaacs sold it again and made another profit; but that's like those traders.' The disingenuous candour of Teresa's manner was in exquisite contrast to Dunn's. He rose and grasped her hand so heartily, she was forced to turn her eyes away.'

'Good-bye!' he said.

'You look tired,' she murmured with a sudden gentleness that surprised him, 'let me go with you a part of the way.'

'It isn't safe for you just now,' he said, thinking of the possible consequences of the alarm Brace had raised.

'Not the way *you* came,' she replied; 'but one known only to myself.'

He hesitated only a moment. 'All right, then,' he said finally, 'let us go at once. It's suffocating here, and I seem to feel this dead bark crinkle under my feet.'

She cast a rapid glance around her, and then seemed to sound with her eyes the far-off depths of the aisles beginning to grow pale with the advancing day, but still holding a strange quiver of heat in the air. When she had finished her half-abstracted scrutiny of the distance, she cast one backward glance at her own cabin and stopped.

'Will you wait a moment for me?' she asked gently.

'Yes—but—no tricks, Teresa! It isn't worth the time.'

She looked him squarely in the eyes without a word.

'Enough,' he said, 'go!'

She was absent for some moments. He was beginning to become uneasy when she made her appearance again, clad in her old faded black dress. Her face was very pale, and her eyes were swollen, but she placed his hand on her shoulder, and bidding him not to fear to lean upon her, for she was quite strong, led the way.

'You look more like yourself now, and yet you don't neither,' said Dunn, looking down upon her. 'You've changed in some way. What is it? Is it on account of that Injin? Couldn't you have found a white man in his place?'

'I reckon he's neither worse nor better for that,' she replied bitterly, 'and perhaps he wasn't as particular in his taste as a white man might have been. But,' she added with a sudden spasm of her old rage, 'it's a lie; he's *not* an Indian; no more than I am. Not unless being born of a mother who scarcely knew him, of a father who never even saw him, and being brought up among white men, and wild beasts—less cruel than they were—could make him one!'

Dunn looked at her in surprise not unmixed with admiration. 'If Nellie,' he thought, 'could love *me* like that.' But he only said—

'For all that he's an Injin. Why, look at his name. It ain't Low. It's *L'Eau Dormante*, Sleeping Water, an Injin name.'

'And what does that prove?' returned Teresa. 'Only that Indians clap a nickname on any stranger, white or red, who may camp with them. Why, even his own father—a white man—the wretch who begot him and abandoned him, *he* had an Indian name—*Loup Noir*.'

'What name did you say?'

'*Le Loup Noir*, the Black Wolf. I suppose you'd call him an Indian too? Eh! What's the matter? We're walking too fast. Stop a moment and rest.' There—there lean on me!

She was none too soon; for, after holding him upright a moment, his limbs failed, and stooping gently she was obliged to support him half reclining against a tree.

'It's the heat!' he said. 'Give me some whisky from my flask, never mind the water,' he added faintly, with a forced laugh, after he had taken a draught at the strong spirit; 'tell me more about the other water—the Sleeping Water—you know. How do you know all this about him and his—father?'

'Partly from him and partly from Curson, who wrote to me about him,' she answered with some hesitation.

But Dunn did not seem to notice this incongruity of correspondence with a former lover. 'And *he* told you?'

'Yes, and I saw the name on an old memorandum book he has, which he says belonged to his father. It's full of old accounts of some trading post on the frontier. It's been missing for a day or two, but it will turn up. But I can swear I saw it.'

Dunn attempted to rise to his feet. 'Put your hand in my pocket,' he said in a hurried whisper. 'No, there!—bring out a book. There, I haven't looked at it yet. Is that it?' he added, handing her the book Brace had given him a few hours before.

'Yes,' said Teresa in surprise. 'Where did you find it?'

'Never mind! now let me see it, quick. Open it, for my sight is failing. There—thank you—that's all!'

'Take more whisky,' said Teresa with a strange anxiety creeping over her. 'You are faint again.'

'Wait! Listen, Teresa—lower—put your ear lower. Listen! I came near killing that chap Low to-day. Wouldn't it have been ridiculous?'

He tried to smile, but his head fell back. He had fainted.

BRET HARTE.

(*To be concluded.*)

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Herbert J. Bathgate, Callao, Peru.—The Editor regrets he cannot accept the study of Walt Whitman kindly offered.

The Editor requests that his Correspondents will be good enough to write to him informing him of the subject of any article they wish to offer, before sending the MS. A stamped and addressed envelope should accompany the MS. if the writer wishes it to be returned in case of non-acceptance. The Editor can in no case hold himself responsible for accidental loss.





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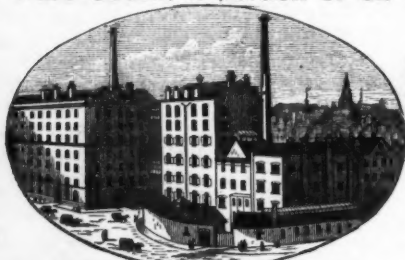
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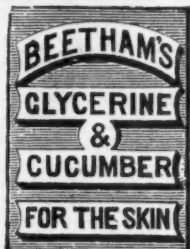
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